

Jedler downed by Israel by mistake

ROME (AFP) — An Israeli fighter destroyed an Italian passenger jet north of Sicily in June 1980, mistaking it for a French transport plane taking enriched uranium to Iraq, according to extracts from a new book published Saturday. But an Israeli embassy spokesman immediately dismissed the report as a "ridiculous story, the fruit of an over-fertile imagination" of the book's authors, journalists Claudio Gatti and Gail Hammer. Extracts of their book "Quinto Scenario" were published on the front pages of Italian newspapers on Saturday. The mysterious downing of the DC9, with 87 people on board, over the Italian island of Ustica while on a domestic flight between Palermo and Bologna, has often been blamed on a missile being fired in error by a U.S. fighter, believing it was shooting down a Libyan aircraft. According to another earlier hypothesis, a French fighter jet was responsible. But no evidence has ever been produced to back up either theory, although an investigation was launched amid pressure from the victims' families. French and U.S. authorities have strenuously denied any involvement.

(AP) — Some tabloids that put Camilla of his life for golden, who was one, thinks relationship is a public relays to refurbishes Whistler, or's royal quotes unmade. Prince Charles, once was caught in love with Bowles. "I am in love," he said Sunday, adding that the prince, 46, army brigadier, obstacles to ascension to el Dempster, today's gossip friends of the prince Charles, spring phone a Parker Bowles, vo. But Mr. Richard, royal comrade Monday to the prince, the prince is touring and remained silent. He has his royal number for services in 1992, published a intercepted plan allegedly being and was expressing the Church of Archdeacon of Austin, has the allegations of Prince Charles, king, when he became the Prince Charles dated when the date and remained Prince Charles' Princess Diana inince and prices December 1992. custody of her son, 11, and Ham Express repeat senior royal roles by a relative. Bowles' son was considering on with Prince Charles' writer, a cousin of Mrs. Park quoted as saying he had agreed to him, giving a part of a map conciliation.

Iran launches women-only taxis

TEHRAN (AFP) — The Iranian taxi company has set aside 300 taxis to cater exclusively for women, as part of moves to segregate men and women according to Islamic principles, the official Iranian news agency IRNA said. The experimental plan went into effect on Saturday in the Iranian capital, and has already been welcomed by Iranian women, who often resent being squeezed between male passengers in small taxis, IRNA said. The new taxis, all with male drivers, have a red and white tag displayed on their windows for distinction. Men and women have already been segregated in buses, with women riding the rear half of vehicle.

Red Cross visits Kuwait held in Iraq

KUWAIT (R) — The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said Saturday its officials had visited Kuwaiti being detained in an Iraqi prison for illegal entry. ICRC official Jean-Philippe Lavooy said by telephone colleagues stationed in Baghdad had visited Falah Mohamad Al Rashidi in Abu Ghraib prison near the Iraqi capital in late January and found him in good health.

The ICRC will continue its efforts to protect and assist him (Rashidi), and we will also facilitate his contacts with his family in Kuwait," Mr. Lavooy said. Kuwait-based Lavooy said Mr. Rashidi was not one of the hundreds of Kuwaitis the emir says are still held by Baghdad following detention during Iraq's 1990-91 occupation. Iraq denies it still holds any Kuwaitis arrested there.

Bahrain's emir holds talks with Hoar

MANAMA (R) — Bahraini Emir Sheikh Isa Ben Salman Al Khalifa held talks Saturday with a U.S. general on boosting military cooperation between the two countries. The Bahrain-based Gulf News Agency said Sheikh Isa also reviewed latest Gulf developments with General Joseph Hoar, commander in chief of the U.S. Central Command. It gave no further details. Bahrain signed military cooperation agreements last month with the United States and Britain.

Deputies rally behind Malhas, demand probe

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Deputies Saturday turned the tables in favour of Health Minister Abdul Rahim Malhas on the second day of a special session that started off with severe criticism of Dr. Malhas for "failing" to substantiate his charges that much of food and medicine that reaches the market is unfit for consumption.

Sixteen out of 19 deputies who took the floor urged support for Dr. Malhas while one went against him and two others projected neutral positions but called for a thorough investigation of his allegations, which appeared in a weekly tabloid over two weeks ago.

Many deputies unleashed severe criticism against the government as they expressed support for Dr. Malhas while others criticised fellow parliamentarians for "turning (Dr. Malhas) into a suspect" instead of supporting him.

The majority of lawmakers demanded that the general prosecutor be entrusted with investigating the charges, which landed the government in the biggest political crisis since it won the confidence of the House in December.

The 16-member Islamic Action Front (IAF) and deputies Toujan Faisal and Theeb Abdullah joined Deputy Abdul Karim Al Dugmeh in urging the House to withdraw confidence from the government.

(Continued on page 5)

ment for what some of them called its inability to deal properly with the corruption charges raised by Dr. Malhas. Lawmaker Abdullah Akuhi Israeih said that there was an obvious need for a major reshuffle in the government so that it could have a stronger parliamentary base and thus have a more efficient cooperation between legislative and executive authorities.

The IAF, Mr. Dugmeh and Ms. Faisal were among the 29 deputies who withheld confidence from the government in December. Mr. Abdullah was absent when the vote was taken and Mr. Akuhi Israeih was among the 41 lawmakers who voted in favour of the government.

The IAF deputies "blamed" Dr. Malhas for "watering down" the original charges he made in his press interview when he spoke on the issue few days later on Jordan Television and in his speech to the House on Wednesday, saying that pressure must have been applied to him.

But they said they agreed with him that there was corruption in the country and that unfit food reaches the market and that some food merchants applied pressure to have their sub-standard goods approved for sale.

In a speech read on behalf of the bloc by Hamzeh Mansour, the IAF also agreed with the minister that there was a deficiency in legislation gov-

erning the entry of food and medicine into the market and that exorbitant profits were being made on drugs.

After adding to the list of cases in which Dr. Malhas said unfit shipments of milk, meat, cheese, wheat were allowed into the market, the IAF demanded answers to a set of questions in light of which it said the House will be able to define its position on the government.

The IAF wanted to know whether the government had responded to any reform programmes. Dr. Malhas might have presented to the government before he made his press statements, whether people in the Ministry of Health resisted his attempts for reform and whether he could substantiate that employees in charge of the drug control department had interests that could conflict with their work.

The IAF also raised questions on a number of issues that would show the extent to which measures taken to guarantee the safety of medicines are sufficient and if unfit medicines were responsible for the death of some people at various hospitals in the Kingdom.

Before urging the House to withhold confidence from the government if it does not resign, the IAF demanded to know why the government responded with "negativity

The witnesses said the boy was coming home from school and was shot in the chest from a distance of 120 metres, still carrying his schoolbag. There had been no clash in the area, the witness said.

Troops tried to take the boy's body from relatives, who evaded the soldiers by running with it through the twisting alleys of the refugee camp, the reporter said.

Hundreds of people attended the boy's funeral in the camp, chanting slogans against the peace deal between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

In the West Bank village of Balata, soldiers killed Khiri

day in Gaza's Rafah refugee camp, Arab reporters said. Mr. Zaout belonged to the Fatah Hawks. The leader of a Hawks breakaway faction in Rafah, Salim Muwafiq, was killed in Thursday's shootout. The stone-throwing clash in Jabalia erupted as a protest over Mr. Muwafiq's killing. Saturday deaths brought to 1,208 the number of Palestinians killed by Israeli troops or civilians since the December 1987 start of the uprising against occupation. Among those killed were 243 children age 16 or younger, according to the Israeli human rights group Betsalel.

Meanwhile, there were growing signs of chaos and fighting as Gaza awaited the outcome of the Israel-PLO negotiations on implementing Palestinian autonomy.

In Rafah, a bystander was killed by Friday evening during clashes between a Fatah official and members of a clan demanding payment for a machine gun. Arab reporters

Tunis minister quits rights forum

TUNIS (R) — A cabinet minister stormed out of a US congress of Tunisia Human Rights League on Saturday and the movement's president announced he was relinquishing his job after a two-year row with the state. League President Moncef Marzouki announced he was quitting after a prolonged campaign for the independence of one of North Africa's most active campaign groups. The dramatic incidents happened during debate on whether the organisation should abide by a 1992 law obliging the league to open up its membership. Many in the group interpreted the law as a way to dilute the league's effectiveness in campaigning for human rights. Members decided to disband rather than obey. The government only allowed the movement to resume activities in mid-1993, even then only to prepare for the congress and adapt itself to the new law.

Price: Jordan 150 fils

AMMAN SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1994, SHA'BAN 25, 1414

Volume 18 Number 5531

Cabinet passes new rules on food, medicine

AMMAN (Petra) — The Council of Ministers Saturday approved four new sets of regulations on food safety, drug testing, private hospitals and reorganisation of the Health Ministry's internal administration.

According to a Cabinet statement issued following a regular session, the food safety regulations will be implemented of the 1971 public health law, which has provisions for testing foodstuffs.

The regulations call for testing foodstuffs, determining their fitness for human consumption and setting conditions for their preservation.

The statement said the regulations on testing drugs stipulate that the Health Ministry's drug control laboratory will conduct tests on samples of drugs manufactured in Jordan or abroad. No medicine will be allowed to be marketed in Jordan unless they clear the laboratory tests.

The ministry did not charge any fees on such tests so far but fees will be collected from now on.

The regulations on private hospitals, the statement said, call for fees for licensing new hospitals.

The fourth set of regulations authorises the minister to appoint two assistants to the directors general of health departments and hospital directors on his own discretion.

Aqaba gets lab

The Aqaba Department of Health has opened a laboratory for testing food supplies imported to Jordan via the port of Aqaba. The department's director, Abdul Rahman Al Shweikini, said the laboratory, which has started operating, was supplied with advanced laboratory equipment and qualified personnel.



CARNAGE: Wounded and dead are unloaded from United Nations armoured personnel carriers at a U.N. hospital in Sarajevo after a Serbian mortar shell fell on a crowded marketplace on Sunday (see page 8). Late reports said nearly 70 people were killed and 200 injured (AFP photo)

Israeli soldiers kill two Palestinians amid chaos

OCCUPIED GAZA (Agencies)

— Israeli soldiers killed two Palestinians in the occupied territories on Saturday, one of them an 11-year-old boy returning from school, Palestinian and Israeli sources said.

Soldiers shot dead the younger, Ayman Al Souri, in front of a United Nations relief office in the Jabalya refugee camp in Gaza, Palestinian sources said.

"Abdullah tried to escape from an army roadblock while the village was under curfew," she said. "The soldiers called on him to stop and when he didn't respond they shot at him. He was badly wounded and died of his wounds."

The spokeswoman said Mr. Abdullah was not among those wanted by the army.

The latest bloodshed came on the second day of a three-day strike called in Gaza after soldiers on Thursday killed an activist in the Fatah Hawks, a group affiliated to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat.

A supporter of the Hamas movement was killed in Gaza on Friday when trying to settle a quarrel between armed militants and a family in Rafah refugee camp, Palestinian sources said.

Also Saturday, Ayman Zaout died of wounds he sustained during the shootout with undercover troops Thurs-

(Continued on page 5)

Sudan reportedly starts offensive against rebels

NAIROBI (Agencies) — The Sudanese government has launched a huge ground and air offensive against southern rebels, sending 100,000 refugees fleeing for their lives, aid workers and diplomats said on Saturday.

Rebels of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and government troops were locked in bitter fighting across the south. Relief organisations, trying to feed some two million hungry people, were having to curtail aid deliveries, the sources said.

Government artillery pounded rebel positions around the Kit River area, south of Juba, on Friday, aid workers said.

Rebel sources said that unidentified attackers, allegedly renegade SPLA fighters who had joined the government side, were at the same time attacking south of Kit.

Khartoum's forces were clearly trying to make a push for the SPLA-held town of Nimule on the frontier with Uganda in an effort to cut the rebels' main military and food supply line.

Some 100,000 southerners displaced by the decade-long war in this area, known as the "Triple A," because of the camps of Ame, Aswa and Atapi, have panicked and were fleeing towards Uganda, aid workers said.

The air attacks came two days after another displaced people's camp at Ame, near the Ugandan border, was attacked by scores of heavily armed militiamen believed to have been supported by the government, Mr. Shinn said.

United Nations officials said Saturday that relief workers would be evacuated from Maridi and Mundri within 48 hours.

The government cancelled permission for relief agencies to fly emergency supplies into Mundri on Wednesday.

"The United States government deplores the recent air attacks by the Sudanese government on civilian populations," the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) said in a joint statement released here.

"These unconscionable assaults demonstrate a total disregard for the lives of innocent people residing in these areas and undermine ongoing humanitarian relief efforts."

Mr. Shinn told a news conference in Nairobi where he was attending a conference on aid to Somalia this week.

The government has denied the offensive and blamed unrest in the south, also hit by a severe drought, on rival rebel factions.

Rebel sources said that unidentified attackers, allegedly renegade SPLA fighters who had joined the government side, were at the same time attacking south of Kit.

Khartoum's forces were clearly trying to make a push for the SPLA-held town of Nimule on the frontier with Uganda in an effort to cut the rebels' main military and food supply line.

Some 100,000 southerners displaced by the decade-long war in this area, known as the "Triple A," because of the camps of Ame, Aswa and Atapi, have panicked and were fleeing towards Uganda, aid workers said.

The air attacks came two days after another displaced people's camp at Ame, near the Ugandan border, was attacked by scores of heavily armed militiamen believed to have been supported by the government, Mr. Shinn said.

United Nations officials said Saturday that relief workers would be evacuated from Maridi and Mundri within 48 hours.

The government cancelled permission for relief agencies to fly emergency supplies into Mundri on Wednesday.

Aziz meets Ekeus amid unclear signs

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz met here Saturday with Roll Ekeus, head of the U.N. Special Commission to disarm Iraq (UNSCOM), Iraqi sources said.

Mr. Ekeus, who arrived Wednesday in Baghdad, was following up on talks with officials on the setting up of a long-term monitoring mechanism of Iraq's weapons programme.

"You will not starve if you raise your voice and say 'enough is enough' and the U.N. should immediately issue a resolution to lift the sanctions," it said.

A newspaper published by President Saddam Hussein's eldest son Uday blasted the envoy for what it said were his contradictory remarks.

"He, the accused, is unsatisfied in Manama and optimistic in Baghdad," the newspaper Babel said.

The sanctions imposed by the United Nations over Iraq's 1990-91 occupation of Kuwait will not be lifted until the Security Council is satisfied that Iraq's weapons of mass destruction are destroyed and its arms industry is under international surveillance.

Mr. Ekeus is trying to organise the mechanics of long-term monitoring.

Dr. Rashed Hammoud, F.R.C.P.,
American Board of Internal Medicine
American Board of Cardiology
Former cardiologist at Texas Heart
Institute in Houston
Announces the opening of his
cardiology clinic in Amman

5th Circle, near Arab Centre for Heart and
Surgery
Phone 862202

(Continued on page 5)

Middle East News

U.N. downgrades Somalia mission

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — The Security Council Friday reduced its peacekeeping mission in Somalia, whittling down the number of troops as well as their mandate for action.

In a resolution, adopted unanimously, the council trimmed the troops to a maximum of 22,000 while abandoning any attempt to forcibly disarm Somali factions responsible for hampering the distribution of famine relief supplies.

The U.N. operation has over 30,000 soldiers at its peak but Secretary-General Boutros Ghali sees no more than 16,000 soldiers available in the future. Currently there are about 25,700 troops, many of whom will leave gradually.

The resolution on the troubled operation followed a decision by the United States to withdraw its troops by March 31.

With the Americans leaving, several western nations with sophisticated equipment will also pull out. Pakistan and India lead the new troops contingents with about 5,000 soldiers each.

But Pakistan's Deputy Ambassador Sher Afghan Khan warned the council of the precariousness of the new mission, saying malnutrition levels were on the rise in some areas, banditry remained endemic and some factions were rearming and weapons were being stockpiled.

U.S. Ambassador Madeleine Albright, noting that the council hoped the operation could be completed by March 1995, said that Somalis must bear the responsibility for national reconciliation and reconstruction themselves.

"Let me stress that the patience of the international community is not an exhaustible resource," she said, adding that Somalis needed to "rigorously and genuinely pursue all opportunities to resolve their differences."

Britain's Ambassador David Hannay said it was "fashionable" to regard Somalia as a defeat for the United Nations. But he said compared to where Somalia was a year ago with thousands dying of hunger and clan warfare raging, the task "is to seek to consolidate their achievements."

The scaling back of U.N. goals stems from prolonged debate last year on the U.N. mission after 24 Pakistani peacekeepers were killed in a

June clash with militia forces loyal to factional leader Mohammad Farah Aideed. Eighteen U.S. troops were killed in October in another clash with General Aideed's troops.

After the October firefight, President Bill Clinton announced he would pull out the U.S. contingent by March 31. Italy, Germany, Turkey and Norway will also have withdrawn their troops by then. Troops from France, Belgium and Sweden left in December.

The new resolution calls for encouraging "cooperative" efforts of the warring factions to disarm, whereas when the U.N. mission began in 1993 the United Nations had set mandatory disarmament as a main goal.

The text says the U.N. force will now concentrate on protecting ports, airports and other infrastructure to guarantee deliveries of food and other relief goods.

It says priority in reconstruction efforts will be given to areas where security is being reestablished and local authorities are cooperative. In other words, the U.N. will no longer hunt Gen. Aideed, for whom an arrest warrant had been issued for the killing of the Pakistani troops.

The council also called on Somalis' factions to work towards reconciliation.

It said the U.N. mission should be completed by March 1995.

U.N. not equipped

The outgoing U.N. special representative in Somalia said Friday the United Nations lacks the political will and the skilled manpower to handle complex peacekeeping.

"I realised after I got here what I was facing," Jonathon Howe, the retired U.S. admiral who took over the Somalia U.N. mission last May, said in an interview in Mogadishu.

"The challenge and the resources I had to do it with just well, there was no match-up."

Mr. Howe said the United Nations lacks a cadre of skilled managers to handle the political, economic, logistical, judicial and other issues that arise in typical peacekeeping missions.

He also indirectly criticised the United States and other nations for cutting and running when things got tough.



CASABLANCA MOSQUE: Moroccans walk on the esplanade of a new mosque built in Casablanca. The mosque opened its doors on Friday, one week before the beginning of the holy fasting month of Ramadan. The new mosque is one of the biggest in the Arab World cost more than \$500 million (AFP photo)

Gunmen kill witness in Sedki bomb trial

CAIRO (Agencies) — unidentified gunmen Friday night killed a witness who was to testify in the trial of extremists for attempting to assassinate Egypt's prime minister, police said. Three bystanders were slain. Dr. Sedki escaped injury in the bombing as his car passed an elementary school, but a schoolgirl was killed and 11 people were wounded.

The assailants opened fire with submachine guns in the automobile showroom owned by Mr. Yehia in Qalubia, 25 kilometres north of Cairo. Dr. Sedki's picture appeared in newspapers when he was given a reward of 40,000 Egyptian pounds (\$11,940).

The assailants opened fire with submachine guns in the automobile showroom owned by Mr. Yehia in Qalubia, 25 kilometres north of Cairo. According to police officials who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Mr. Yehia, a customer and a guard and employee at the car showroom were killed. A policeman who happened to be present was wounded, the officials said. His condition was not immediately known.

The radical movement Jihad claimed responsibility for the attack on Dr. Sedki last Nov. 25. It is one of the militant groups seeking to overthrow Egypt's secular government and install strict Islamic rule.

Mr. Yehia identified Sayed Suleiman as the man who bought a vehicle from him

that was used in the Sedki car bombing. Mr. Suleiman is one of nine men seized and being tried for the attempted assassination. Six other are on trial in absentia.

Officials said pairs of unidentified assailants killed shopkeeper Omer Gunes and coffee-house owner Faik Kara in separate attacks. They gave no motive for the murders.

Local journalists linked them to a factional feud within Hizbullah, a secret Islamic group said to have ties with the separatist Kurdish Labour Party (PKK).

The government denies the death squad charges, blaming PKK-Hizbullah rivalry for many of the hundreds of mystery murders perpetrated in the region over the past three years.

They were among more than 4,100 soldiers, civilians and guerrillas killed in the east and southeast last year.

The death toll has not slackened.

Not including the street killings in Diyarbakir, officials say 273 people died in the region in January, including 189 rebels, 35 civilians, 30 members of the security forces and 19 village guards paid by the state to fight the PKK.

Mr. Celik said that despite the "war atmosphere" in the region, DEP was still planning to fight the elections. "We may boycott them if there are too many killings," he said.

The PKK, which has not decided its policy towards the elections, contributed to the sense of menace in Diyarbakir since late September as the militants target those whose skill and investment are important to the economy. The Danish diplomats will temporarily move to Tunis. FLS Industries, a Danish group building a concrete plant in eastern Algeria, has 20 employees in the country, but there was no announcement that they would leave.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel chooses new head of women's corps

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel's military on Friday chose a new commander for its women's corps, a post that often draws fire from women's groups who see it as a symbol of the limited opportunity for women in the highest ranks of the armed forces. Colonel Yisraela Oron, 42, will be promoted to the rank of brigadier general and will officially take charge of the army's female soldiers in the next few months, an army statement said. Col. Oron was drafted into the army in 1970 and served in various positions in the women's corps, including commander of the main basic training base for women. She is replacing Brig. Gen. Yehudit Ben-Natan who told the Associated Press she intended to retire when her term was up since "I have nowhere else to go." Gen. Ben-Natan's request for a transfer to the army's general staff was reportedly rejected. Women, drafted at 18 for two years of service, are barred from doing combat duty which prevents them from rising to high-level positions that require battle experience. There have been frequent complaints that women are assigned menial tasks like making coffee and are subject to harassment by male superior officers. The women's corps, which accounts for nearly half of the 176,000 standing military, is known by its Hebrew acronym, CHEN, which is also Hebrew for "beauty."

Angola expels 4 Israelis for running militia

TEL AVIV (AP) — Angola expelled 20 foreigners, including four Israelis, in December for running a private army and for smuggling diamonds to finance a rebel movement, Israel Radio reported Friday. One of the Israelis headed a licensed security firm, but was expelled when the Angolan Interior Ministry discovered he was carrying out operations reserved for the security forces, the radio quoted unidentified ministry officials as saying. The other foreigners, including South Africans, Portuguese, and nationals of various Arab states, were all employees of the security firm. The radio did not name any of the foreigners. The firm was authorised to handle only personal security services, the radio said, but had purchased 500 assault rifles and submachineguns. In addition, the Israeli who headed the firm smuggled diamonds out of Angola and laundered the proceeds through a Brussels bank to finance the rebel National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). UNITA, once a guerrilla movement confined to Angola's bush, has occupied more than half the Southern African nation since accusing the government of rigging multi-party elections in Sept. 1992. The rebels have seized almost complete control of Angola's diamond fields, potentially the world's second-most productive with an estimated yield of \$200 million per year. The radio noted that the Angolan government received "limited security assistance" from Israel as part of a deal to renew ties with the Jewish state last year. The revelation came a day after the news that enemies of the regime in Congo are offering Israeli mercenaries \$15 million to help them overthrow the government, which is to be aided by Israeli military advisers.

Denmark to pull diplomats out of Algeria

COPENHAGEN (AP) — Denmark is pulling its ambassador and three other diplomats out of Algeria next week, because of recent killings of foreigners by militants. The Foreign Ministry said Friday. The embassy in Algiers will remain open, with Algerian staff and one Danish office clerk without diplomatic status, a senior Foreign Ministry official said. "The reason for this is the insecure situation which Western people face in Algeria," he said, refusing to be identified in line with civil service practice. At least 27 foreigners have been killed since late September as the militants target those whose skill and investment are important to the economy. The Danish diplomats will temporarily move to Tunis. FLS Industries, a Danish group building a concrete plant in eastern Algeria, has 20 employees in the country, but there was no announcement that they would leave.

4 killed in building collapse

KHARTOUM (AP) — Four people were killed and seven injured when a building collapsed during construction in downtown Khartoum, a government newspaper said. The victims were construction workers, said the daily Al Sudan Al Hadith. It said 14 other workers were missing after the collapse of the two-storey structure Thursday. It was unclear if some of those were later rescued. The cause of the collapse was under investigation, but one report said it resulted from too much sand being mixed in the cement.

Greece asks Iran to exert influence on Bosnia

ATHENS (AP) — Greece's foreign minister, Carolos Papoulias, Friday asked Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati to exert his influence on the Bosnian government for it to accept a European Union (EU) peace plan dividing its war-torn country. Mr. Velayati said that he would brief Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic, but did not specify whether his country was happy with the EU plan. Iran has been a major supporter of the mainly-Muslim Bosnian government in its war against rebel Serbs and Croats. Greece currently holds the EU's six-month rotating presidency and has been trying to garner support for the stalled peace talks in Geneva. "I asked the minister to unite his efforts with those of the European Union to find a solution. And he promised this to me. I am referring to the good relations between Tehran and Mr. Izetbegovic," Mr. Papoulias said after a two-hour meeting with Mr. Velayati.

Rabin to visit Portugal on Feb. 23

LISBON (R) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin will visit Portugal on Feb. 23 to discuss the Middle East peace process and bilateral issues, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said. Mr. Rabin, who will be visiting Portugal for the first time as Israeli prime minister, will meet President Mario Soares and Prime Minister Anibal Cavaco Silva, the spokesman added.

JORDAN TELEVISION

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

22:25 Frankfurt (RJ) Rome (AZ)
22:30 Athens, Vienna (RJ) Doha, Bahrain (G)
22:35 Madrid, Geneva (RJ) Moscow (SU)
22:40 Abu Dhabi, Tel Aviv (RJ) Aqaba (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

12:10 Rome (AZ)
12:30 Doha, Bahrain (G)
16:05 Moscow (SU)
20:25 Larnaca (CY)
20:55 Cairo (MS)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in \$ per kg.

Apples 60/50
Bananas (Mukamas) 50/40
Cabbage 50/30
Carrots 70/50
Cauliflower 90/70
Clementine 260/220
Cucumbers (large) 150/120
Cucumbers (small) 250/220
Eggplant 160/140
Garlic 90/70
Grape Fruit 200/180
Green beans 70/60
Lemon 160/140
Marrow (large) 140/120
Marrow (small) 240/220
Olives 70/60
Orange 550/500
Onion (dry) 220/190
Onion (green) 220/190
Pepper (hot) 220/190
Pepper (sweet) 250/220
Potato 60/50
Raisins 120/100
Tomato 160/140
Spinach 70/60
String beans 640/500

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

11:00 Damascus (AZ)
12:00 Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (G)
14:25 Moscow (SU)
14:45 Larnaca (CY)
15:45 Beirut (ME)
20:45 Cairo (MS)

22:45 Istanbul (TA)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in \$ per kg.

Apples 60/50
Bananas (Mukamas) 50/40
Cabbage 50/30
Carrots 70/50
Cauliflower 90/70
Clementine 260/220
Cucumbers (large) 150/120
Cucumbers (small) 250/220
Eggplant 160/140
Garlic 90/70
Grape Fruit 200/180
Green beans 70/60
Lemon 160/140
Marrow (large) 140/120
Marrow (small) 240/220
Olives 70/60
Orange 550/500
Onion (dry) 220/190
Onion (green) 220/190
Pepper (hot) 220/190
Pepper (sweet) 250/220
Potato 60/50
Raisins 120/100
Tomato 160/140
Spinach 70/60
String beans 640/500

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:00 Beirn (RJ)
10:15 Frankfurt (RJ)
11:15 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
11:30 Rome (RJ)
11:59 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)

12:30 Vienna (add) (RJ)

12:45 Damascus (RJ)

13:45 Jeddah (RJ)

14:45 Aqaba (RJ)

16:45 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

17:45 Bangkok (RJ)

18:45 Damasus (RJ)

19:45 Cairo (RJ)

20:45 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)

21:45 Larnaca (RJ)

21:55 New Delhi (RJ)

22:00 Agaba (RJ)

22:00 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)

22:30 Bangkok (RJ)

22:30 London, Athens (RJ)

00:30 Singapore, Jakarta (RJ)

02:30 Manila, Saigon (RJ)

02:30 Tokyo, Seoul (RJ)

02:30 Hong Kong (RJ)

02:30 Kuala Lumpur (RJ)

02:30 Perth, Sydney (RJ)

02:30 Melbourne (RJ)

02:30 Sydney (RJ)

02:30 Melbourne (RJ)

02:30 Sydney (RJ)



Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Saturday holds a press briefing to announce the fourth charity campaign planned by the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development during Ramadan (Petra photo)

QAF plans 4th charity drive

AMMAN (Petra) — For the

fourth consecutive year, the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF) will launch a charity campaign involving volunteers and scouts during the month of Ramadan, Her Royal Highness Princess Basma announced Saturday.

Addressing a press briefing, the princess, who is also QAF honorary chairperson, said that this year the funds raised will target three major areas of need: Rehabilitation and vocational training programmes for heads of needy families; direct in-kind assistance to needy families suffering from malnutrition and poor health; and financial aid to excelling underprivileged students so that they may continue their education at colleges and universities.

Noting that QAF gives priority to rehabilitation programmes, the princess said that by providing training to the needy, QAF hopes to gradually transform the concept of

direct aid into actual development which would enable such families to ensure a steady income for themselves.

With 45 centres around the country dedicated to helping the needy QAF realises the extent of poverty resulting from unemployment and other causes, as well as the social and economic conditions of needy families, said Princess Basma.

"We do not claim that through the charity campaigns we will find a solution to poverty in Jordan, but we feel

we are committed by our faith to ensure solidarity among the people in the coming holy month," stressed the Princess.

The success of the charity campaign in the past three years, she said, has encouraged QAF to continue its funding efforts and in-kind contributions to the needy.

Last year's campaign, said Princess Basma, resulted in JD 40,000 collected and distributed to beneficiaries by QAF

offices. The contributions consisted of in-kind assistance to 8,260 families, medical care and drugs for 958 families, and surgical operations and the purchase of medical equipment, the Princess said.

She added that some aid went to handicapped children and part of the donations were used to purchase sheep for families in rural regions, as well as to finance sewing and knitting training courses and small stores for heads of families.

QAF this year also plans to grant loans to help families start their own income-generating projects, and farming equipment will be offered to farmers, said Princess Basma.

Through this campaign, added the princess, QAF hopes to foster the concept of social solidarity during Ramadan when people are expected to give alms to the poor.

Business group to urge Australians to import more from Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian Businessmen's Association (JBA) Saturday

said it plans to urge the concerned Australian authorities to arrange for more Jordanian imports, especially phosphate and potash, in an effort to adjust the balance of trade which is currently in favour of Australia.

The JBA is arranging a general meeting Sunday evening between JBA members and an Australian delegation, due to arrive in Amman Sunday, to discuss prospects of increased trade and economic cooperation, said a JBA statement.

Jordanian business persons will urge the delegation, led by Henry Cowan, deputy prime minister and minister of commerce and trade relations with those who attended the meeting.

Such imports included live

change of Western Australia, to import Jordanian industrial products, said the statement.

The meeting which will be held at the Amman Philadelphia Hotel, is part of JBA programme aimed at stimulating economic and trade links with other countries.

Similar meetings have been organised by the JBA with visitors and government officials from Canada, the United States as well as Australia, said the statement.

Mr. Cowan's talks are considered a follow-up to a session he held in Jordan during a visit last year, Petra said.

The agency said that a joint Jordanian-Australian committee has been working to increase trade exchanges between the two countries and concentrating on launching joint ventures in the Kingdom.

According to the JBA statement Jordan's imports from Australia rose from JD 1.8 million in 1989 to JD 25.4 million in 1991, but dropped to JD 15.3 million in 1992.

Such imports included live

sheep, frozen meat, cheese and honey as well as cereals, lubricating oil, raw aluminium and medical equipment.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, Saturday said that Mr. Cowan will spend several days in the Kingdom and meet with officials from the public and private sectors to discuss economic and trade relations.

Mr. Cowan's talks are considered a follow-up to a session he held in Jordan during a visit last year, Petra said.

The agency said that a joint Jordanian-Australian committee has been working to increase trade exchanges between the two countries and concentrating on launching joint ventures in the Kingdom.

According to the JBA statement Jordan's imports from Australia rose from JD 1.8 million in 1989 to JD 25.4 million in 1991, but dropped to JD 15.3 million in 1992.

Such imports included live

sheep, frozen meat, cheese and honey as well as cereals, lubricating oil, raw aluminium and medical equipment.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, Saturday said that Mr. Cowan will spend several days in the Kingdom and meet with officials from the public and private sectors to discuss economic and trade relations.

Mr. Cowan's talks are considered a follow-up to a session he held in Jordan during a visit last year, Petra said.

The agency said that a joint Jordanian-Australian committee has been working to increase trade exchanges between the two countries and concentrating on launching joint ventures in the Kingdom.

According to the JBA statement Jordan's imports from Australia rose from JD 1.8 million in 1989 to JD 25.4 million in 1991, but dropped to JD 15.3 million in 1992.

Such imports included live

sheep, frozen meat, cheese and honey as well as cereals, lubricating oil, raw aluminium and medical equipment.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, Saturday said that Mr. Cowan will spend several days in the Kingdom and meet with officials from the public and private sectors to discuss economic and trade relations.

Mr. Cowan's talks are considered a follow-up to a session he held in Jordan during a visit last year, Petra said.

The agency said that a joint Jordanian-Australian committee has been working to increase trade exchanges between the two countries and concentrating on launching joint ventures in the Kingdom.

According to the JBA statement Jordan's imports from Australia rose from JD 1.8 million in 1989 to JD 25.4 million in 1991, but dropped to JD 15.3 million in 1992.

Such imports included live

sheep, frozen meat, cheese and honey as well as cereals, lubricating oil, raw aluminium and medical equipment.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, Saturday said that Mr. Cowan will spend several days in the Kingdom and meet with officials from the public and private sectors to discuss economic and trade relations.

Mr. Cowan's talks are considered a follow-up to a session he held in Jordan during a visit last year, Petra said.

The agency said that a joint Jordanian-Australian committee has been working to increase trade exchanges between the two countries and concentrating on launching joint ventures in the Kingdom.

According to the JBA statement Jordan's imports from Australia rose from JD 1.8 million in 1989 to JD 25.4 million in 1991, but dropped to JD 15.3 million in 1992.

Such imports included live

sheep, frozen meat, cheese and honey as well as cereals, lubricating oil, raw aluminium and medical equipment.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, Saturday said that Mr. Cowan will spend several days in the Kingdom and meet with officials from the public and private sectors to discuss economic and trade relations.

Mr. Cowan's talks are considered a follow-up to a session he held in Jordan during a visit last year, Petra said.

The agency said that a joint Jordanian-Australian committee has been working to increase trade exchanges between the two countries and concentrating on launching joint ventures in the Kingdom.

According to the JBA statement Jordan's imports from Australia rose from JD 1.8 million in 1989 to JD 25.4 million in 1991, but dropped to JD 15.3 million in 1992.

Such imports included live

sheep, frozen meat, cheese and honey as well as cereals, lubricating oil, raw aluminium and medical equipment.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, Saturday said that Mr. Cowan will spend several days in the Kingdom and meet with officials from the public and private sectors to discuss economic and trade relations.

Mr. Cowan's talks are considered a follow-up to a session he held in Jordan during a visit last year, Petra said.

The agency said that a joint Jordanian-Australian committee has been working to increase trade exchanges between the two countries and concentrating on launching joint ventures in the Kingdom.

According to the JBA statement Jordan's imports from Australia rose from JD 1.8 million in 1989 to JD 25.4 million in 1991, but dropped to JD 15.3 million in 1992.

Such imports included live

sheep, frozen meat, cheese and honey as well as cereals, lubricating oil, raw aluminium and medical equipment.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, Saturday said that Mr. Cowan will spend several days in the Kingdom and meet with officials from the public and private sectors to discuss economic and trade relations.

Mr. Cowan's talks are considered a follow-up to a session he held in Jordan during a visit last year, Petra said.

The agency said that a joint Jordanian-Australian committee has been working to increase trade exchanges between the two countries and concentrating on launching joint ventures in the Kingdom.

According to the JBA statement Jordan's imports from Australia rose from JD 1.8 million in 1989 to JD 25.4 million in 1991, but dropped to JD 15.3 million in 1992.

Such imports included live

sheep, frozen meat, cheese and honey as well as cereals, lubricating oil, raw aluminium and medical equipment.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, Saturday said that Mr. Cowan will spend several days in the Kingdom and meet with officials from the public and private sectors to discuss economic and trade relations.

Mr. Cowan's talks are considered a follow-up to a session he held in Jordan during a visit last year, Petra said.

The agency said that a joint Jordanian-Australian committee has been working to increase trade exchanges between the two countries and concentrating on launching joint ventures in the Kingdom.

According to the JBA statement Jordan's imports from Australia rose from JD 1.8 million in 1989 to JD 25.4 million in 1991, but dropped to JD 15.3 million in 1992.

Such imports included live

sheep, frozen meat, cheese and honey as well as cereals, lubricating oil, raw aluminium and medical equipment.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, Saturday said that Mr. Cowan will spend several days in the Kingdom and meet with officials from the public and private sectors to discuss economic and trade relations.

Mr. Cowan's talks are considered a follow-up to a session he held in Jordan during a visit last year, Petra said.

The agency said that a joint Jordanian-Australian committee has been working to increase trade exchanges between the two countries and concentrating on launching joint ventures in the Kingdom.

According to the JBA statement Jordan's imports from Australia rose from JD 1.8 million in 1989 to JD 25.4 million in 1991, but dropped to JD 15.3 million in 1992.

Such imports included live

sheep, frozen meat, cheese and honey as well as cereals, lubricating oil, raw aluminium and medical equipment.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, Saturday said that Mr. Cowan will spend several days in the Kingdom and meet with officials from the public and private sectors to discuss economic and trade relations.

Mr. Cowan's talks are considered a follow-up to a session he held in Jordan during a visit last year, Petra said.

The agency said that a joint Jordanian-Australian committee has been working to increase trade exchanges between the two countries and concentrating on launching joint ventures in the Kingdom.

According to the JBA statement Jordan's imports from Australia rose from JD 1.8 million in 1989 to JD 25.4 million in 1991, but dropped to JD 15.3 million in 1992.

Such imports included live

sheep, frozen meat, cheese and honey as well as cereals, lubricating oil, raw aluminium and medical equipment.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, Saturday said that Mr. Cowan will spend several days in the Kingdom and meet with officials from the public and private sectors to discuss economic and trade relations.

Mr. Cowan's talks are considered a follow-up to a session he held in Jordan during a visit last year, Petra said.

The agency said that a joint Jordanian-Australian committee has been working to increase trade exchanges between the two countries and concentrating on launching joint ventures in the Kingdom.

According to the JBA statement Jordan's imports from Australia rose from JD 1.8 million in 1989 to JD 25.4 million in 1991, but dropped to JD 15.3 million in 1992.

Such imports included live

sheep, frozen meat, cheese and honey as well as cereals, lubricating oil, raw aluminium and medical equipment.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, Saturday said that Mr. Cowan will spend several days in the Kingdom and meet with officials from the public and private sectors to discuss economic and trade relations.

Mr. Cowan's talks are considered a follow-up to a session he held in Jordan during a visit last year, Petra said.

The agency said that a joint Jordanian-Australian committee has been working to increase trade exchanges between the two countries and concentrating on launching joint ventures in the Kingdom.

According to the JBA statement Jordan's imports from Australia rose from JD 1.8 million in 1989 to JD 25.4 million in 1991, but dropped to JD 15.3 million in 1992.

Such imports included live

sheep, frozen meat, cheese and honey as well as cereals, lubricating oil, raw aluminium and medical equipment.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, Saturday said that Mr. Cowan will spend several days in the Kingdom and meet with officials from the public and private sectors to discuss economic and trade relations.

Mr. Cowan's talks are considered a follow-up to a session he held in Jordan during a visit last year, Petra said.

The agency said that a joint Jordanian-Australian committee has been working to increase trade exchanges between the two countries and concentrating on launching joint ventures in the Kingdom.

According to the JBA statement Jordan's imports from Australia rose from JD 1.8 million in 1989 to JD 25.4 million in 1991, but dropped to JD 15.3 million in 1992.

Such imports included live

sheep, frozen meat, cheese and honey as well as cereals, lubricating oil, raw aluminium and medical equipment.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, Saturday said that Mr. Cowan will spend several days in the Kingdom and meet with officials from the public and private sectors to discuss economic and trade relations.

Mr. Cowan's talks are considered a follow-up to a session he held in Jordan during a visit last year, Petra said.

The agency said that a joint Jordanian-Australian committee has been working to increase trade exchanges between the two countries and concentrating on launching joint ventures in the Kingdom.

According to the JBA statement Jordan's imports from Australia rose from JD 1.8 million in 1989 to JD 25.4 million in 1991, but dropped to JD 15.3 million in 1992.

Such imports included live

sheep, frozen meat, cheese and honey as well as cereals, lubricating oil, raw aluminium and medical equipment.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, Saturday said that Mr. Cowan will spend several days in the Kingdom and meet with officials from the public and private sectors to discuss economic and trade relations.

Mr. Cowan's talks are considered a follow-up to a session he held in Jordan during a visit last year, Petra said.

The agency said that a joint Jordanian-Australian committee has been working to increase trade exchanges between the two countries and concentrating on launching joint ventures in the Kingdom.

According to the JBA statement Jordan's imports from Australia rose from JD 1.8 million in 1989 to JD 25.4 million in 1991, but dropped to JD 15.3 million in 1992.

Opinion & Analysis

JORDAN TIMES, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1994

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
Established 1975

الجريدة العربية الوحيدة الصادرة باللغة الإنجليزية في الأردن

Chairman of the Board of Directors:
MAHMOUD AL KAYED

Director General:
MOHAMMAD AMAD

Editor-in-Chief:
GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:
Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephones: 667171/6, 670141-4
Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO
Facsimile: 696183

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the
Jordan Times advertising department.

Save the children

THE CASE of the 8-year-old child tragically killed in a school bus accident in Amman a couple of days ago brings to the fore once again the urgency of providing our youngsters with more protection on the roads. Children constitute a special category of people who are highly vulnerable to our ways of driving and handling traffic problems. Countries which take the right of the child seriously enough have put in place several measures to enhance the safety of children. Road accidents and related threats to life figure prominently on the list of these concerns.

The case of Nour Mustafa who was dragged under the wheels of the schoolbus that took her home is a bizarre one bordering on criminal negligence. The negligence in Nour's situation is broad enough to touch not only the bus driver or its supervisor but also the school itself. Judging by what one sees at the early hours of each school day, school buses speed past other motor vehicles rather dangerously in a bid, it seems, to suit the driver's mood or time. The driving pattern of many bus drivers is so reckless and arbitrary that they should not have been allowed to drive students to and from schools.

This is where the civil and criminal responsibilities of schools lie. School authorities must be made accountable for their negligent choice of people in whose hands the lives of children are entrusted. In an effort to make more profit and save money, many private schools engage in arbitrary selection of drivers that often jeopardises the lives of our younger generations.

Moreover, we have yet to see schools, private or public, practise what all the civilised world has been practising for decades, namely, assign personnel in and around their campuses to supervise the traffic around the vicinity of the schools in order to stop vehicles when necessary to ensure safe entry and departure of pupils.

Besides legislating laws that make it incumbent on schools to make traffic in their environs more manageable for safe arrivals and departures, traffic police should be called upon to facilitate street crossings for children. Surely our traffic people notice on daily basis how our students try desperately to cross streets on their way to and from schools at a great risk to their lives. Why can't we do what all other advanced countries have been doing and start assigning policemen to stop traffic at designated crossings so that our boys and girls can cross with relative safety. Should we wait till scores of other children die before we start taking solid action? This is also a subject for Parliament to take up because their electors expect them to seize the initiative in seeing to it that such urgently needed corrective measures are taken for the benefit of our society at large.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily said Saturday that the explosions that wrecked the movie houses in Zarqa and Amman were not politically motivated but rather the work of criminals and the police and the security authorities will easily handle them. Tareq Masarweh said that he was of this view since no party has claimed responsibility for the attacks and no opposition group has declared war on the Jordanian society. He also expressed the view that the perpetrators were paid by foreign groups to destabilise the country which is already subjected to enormous pressures on all sides. The writer said that these explosions are going to fail to achieve their aims and would never shake the society's self-confidence because the society's elements of freedom and democracy are much stronger than the forces of evil which act in the dark. We were not surprised by these explosions as they aim at creating trouble for the country and are perpetrated by hostile forces that aim at imposing hegemony on Jordan and the Arab region, said the writer. Jordan, he continued, is not like Egypt or Algeria and those who planted the bombs to kill innocent people are not affiliated to political groups, otherwise we would have heard their claims. The writer called on Jordanian citizens to act collectively and stem this evil from its roots, noting that Jordanians are determined to safeguard their national interests.

DESPITE REPEATED declaration on the part of the concerned authorities that the war on unemployment will be won and that measures were under way to achieve that goal, one has little trust that such an objective will ever be attained, according to Abdullah Al Khatib, a columnist in Al Dustour daily. The writer said that there is no magic wand to deal with this problem which has been plaguing Jordan, and any observer and researcher can easily come to the conclusion that "Alam is fighting a losing battle and that rhetorics and oratory speeches can do nothing to deal with the situation. Jordan, he stressed, in by no means fight unemployment and poverty while its population continues to grow unchecked."

Sunday's Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fahed Al Fanek

The fight against corruption should be done responsibly, based on proof

Seeing the outcome of the statements made by Dr. Abdul Rahim Malhas, the minister of health, some things should be put in the right perspective. Those who took exception with both his approach and the contents of his statements did not do that for the benefit of the "corrupt monsters". They did so because they cannot be taken by words of anger and sensationalism, and because they care about Jordan's reputation, internally and externally, its vital interests and the protection of the innocent from vague and generalised accusations.

Everyone knows that loopholes and malpractices do exist everywhere. That is why strict laws are enacted to deter potential violators. The minister is charged with the specific responsibility of finding these violators and bringing them to justice.

The problem is that the minister generalised. He practically labelled all food and medicine dealers as greedy mafiosi and monsters. The real victims of this generalisation are the honest traders who import and distribute our food and medicine. In my opinion, the exports, food, medicine and tourism sectors were hurt and the image of the country was tarnished. The economic damages are very hard to assess at this stage and most likely will be protracted.

It is not right for a responsible minister, with full authority to correct the wrong and to put the record straight, to create a sensation by going public and generalising.

Some commentators have welcomed the minister's statements "irrespective of the consequences" and of the damages that could have been wrought to trade, industry, exports, tourism or the country's image, which, ironically, was hailed by the Reuter news agency as the health centre of excellence in the Arab World on the very day the minister was uttering his accusations.

I definitely agree that public confidence should not be built on deception and hiding the facts. The question therefore is whether the minister has facts. His statement in the Parliament on Wednesday showed that he has some impressions.

On the other hand, we should ask ourselves: What about setting a precedent?

If what Dr. Malhas did is acceptable, and a sure way to become popular and a man of principles, this may tempt the minister of water to go to the media and describe the water we drink as mixed with sewage water without being able to prove it. The minister of agriculture might be tempted to give an interview to a paper and claim that Jordanian vegetables and fruits are contaminated, poisonous and unfit for human consumption.

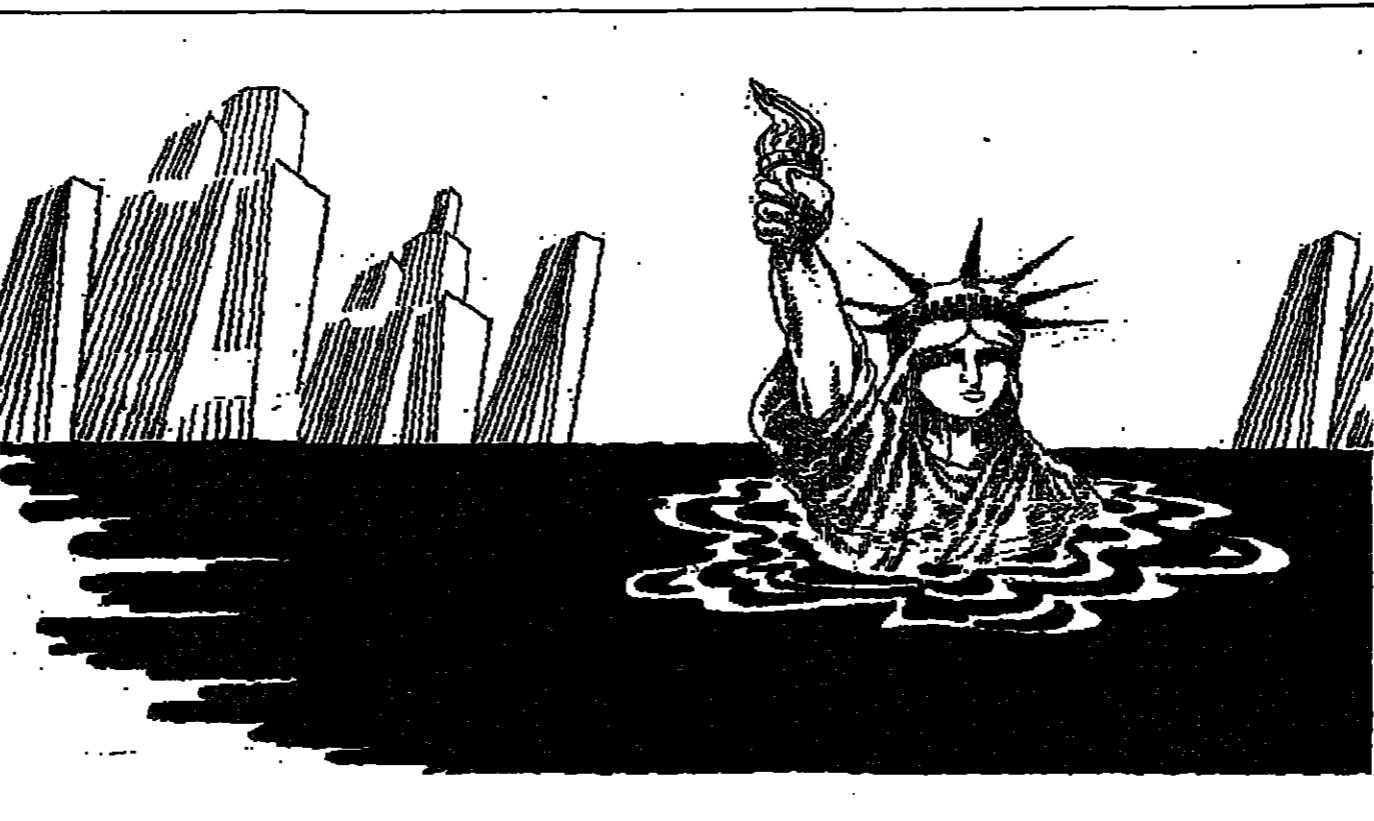
It could be an endless, destructive course of action whereby one could easily and unjustly throw wild accusations.

Some of these ministers may have a grain of truth in their assumed allegations. But should we accept their sweeping generalisations without hard evidence, then applaud them and call them heroes and men of principles, or, worse, candidates in the next elections with assured success?

It is our duty to stand hard against corruption, but to do so responsibly and supported by proof.

Listening to the lengthy statement of the minister of health in Parliament, one can easily conclude that he failed to prove that our food is trash, our traders are monsters, our medicine is not according to international specifications and our legal system yields to the pressures of the "sharks". On the contrary, he rephrased his previous statement to refer to a corrupt minority and talk about his efforts to supervise food shipments and prevent entry of suspect products.

Now the minister will have to substantiate his allegations before public opinion in the country starts flowing in reverse.



M. KAHIL

America is better off without a 'national identity'

By Richard Sennett

NEW YORK — The Clinton administration has unveiled its plan to bring Americans together. Sheldon Hackney, chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, announced this month that the government would hold a series of televised "town meetings" aimed at overcoming ethnic rivalries. They will explore the bonds of community, the meaning of American identity and "how immigrant groups fit into the American dream."

It is easy to sympathise with what Mr. Hackney, Bill Clinton and other sponsors of the forums want to achieve. They aim to challenge the inward-looking racial, ethnic and sexual zealotry that denies America a common civic culture. Yet this is a deeply wrong-headed project.

First, it looks back on an America that never existed. From the beginning, American society has been fragmented by differences of wealth, religion and language, as well as by the conflicts between slave and nonslave states. The waves of immigration after the Civil War did not break apart a unified nation; they added new diversities to old divisions.

In some ways, we Americans are more divided today than during that first great immigrant wave. For example, because our society has become more open sexually, marriage and family no longer trace a clear design in people's lives.

Mr. Hackney is the latest in a long line of Americans who have sought to counter society's fissures by discovering a national identity or an American character. These phrases, however, merely display the gentlemanly face of nationalism.

Nationalism creates a mythic land in which people understand themselves and each other. The myth disguises inequalities and legitimises

attacks on people whose lives are different. Immigrants who came to America three or four generations ago thus encountered great prejudices based on the supposed fact that they weren't yet "real Americans."

Does Mr. Hackney feel bad about this? Of course he does. Yet he asserts that it is "much better to start talking about American identity before getting into immigration issues."

This supposes an America that is obscured by the presence of outsiders, an America waiting for us once we stop obsessing about our differences.

Not only is Mr. Hackney's blueprint for culture flawed in principle, it is perverse in practice. In the televised town meetings, they seek to define "us" in contrast to a threatening "other." Members of racial minorities (or homosexuals, immigrants, the elderly) face the problem 19th century immigrants faced. It is not so much the danger of turning inward — a real temptation for any threatened group — as the more subtle challenge of how to avoid being defined by someone else.

Given the complexities of American society today, it is immensely important that people find ways to act together with those they do not understand or whom they dislike when they do understand.

The Clinton administration's finest achievements, like the North American Free Trade Agreement, have acknowledged that America is not an island. Mr. Clinton has rightly sought to address, as in his proposed health care plan, collective problems that affect different Americans in radically different ways.

Perhaps Mr. Hackney's project is a symptom of how burdensome these responsibilities and realities feel. Talking about how we see each other and how we can come together is much more pleasant than reshaping the real America. But because this sort of pleasure has brought such terrible nationalistic and xenophobic consequences in the past (and now as well, especially in the former Yugoslavia), I don't think this "national conversation" should be shrugged off as just another million-dollar folly.

The challenge and the promise of American society lie in finding ways of acting together without invoking the evil of a shared national identity. To do so we need to draw on our capacity to cooperate rather than on our desire to compete.

In this kind of meeting, people do not decide things. Instead, they attempt to rouse sentiments of sharing and community through self-revelations and expressions of sympathy: "I feel your pain." These sorts of events tend to oversimplify our divisions and exclude the confusions inherent in the physical world.

Mr. Hackney, by contrast, seems to offer a Serbian solution to the challenge of living with one another — The New York Times.

Asia wonders if NAFTA a boon or a bane

By David Schlesinger
Reuter

told the export-oriented is-land's press.

Asked directly if she were worried that NAFTA would be negative for China, Wu Yi, minister of foreign trade and economic cooperation, told a news conference there was a tendency in the world to form regional economic blocs.

"I hope NAFTA will be open and non-exclusive. It should promote world trade and economy," she said.

A European diplomat said NAFTA is entirely negative for China as Mexico, which borders the rich U.S. market, makes many of the same textiles and light industrial goods as China — and other Asian exporting powerhouses.

"Mexican wages are low and the workforce is easier to control than China's," he said.

Beijing's official Xinhua News Agency took a similar line in a recent commentary when it said: "With the opening of the Mexican market, that country will attract more foreign investment from the U.S., Canada, the Republic of Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan, who will take the opportunity to enhance their indirect exports to the (NAFTA) zone."

Other economists downplay a threatened loss of market, saying that Asia's own rapidly growing domestic demand for consumer products will more than balance out the danger.

"A lot of the people investing in China are looking at Asia as their final or penultimate market," said Ian Perkin of the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce.

"Mexico doesn't fit into that equation unless you're selling directly into the North American market."

Some Asian nations like Taiwan, where the average worker makes more than 1,000 per month, have already priced themselves out of the labour-intensive market.

Others, like Indonesia which has just raised its minimum wage to \$1.81 per day, are still extremely competitive.

But even bureaucrats in Jakarta are not prepared to be complacent about the challenge of NAFTA.

"Indonesian businessmen should increase their efficiency for greater competition in the future," one official said.

LETTERS

An exercise in democracy

To the Editor:

Minister of Health Abdul Rahim Malhas' recent statements have had a great impact on and touched a sensitive chord in Jordanians.

Many media people inside Jordan and abroad have tackled the issue, which proves how much importance is attached to such a matter.

For me, Dr. Malhas' declarations concerning food and medicine assume a paramount importance for several reasons.

First, the minister tackles a most serious issue: the sources from which some traders import food not fit for consumption and medicine that does not meet international standards and specifications.

In addition, he talks about "sharks" who insist on over 300 per cent profit on medicine, all at the expense of the ordinary citizens.

Matters touching people's lives should be treated with utmost seriousness.

A second point I would like to raise is the fact that revelations were made by a man on duty pinpointing the defects of his ministry. He is not an ordinary citizen who makes a passing remark, devoid of proof or meaning. His remarks should not therefore be taken lightly.

This is a matter that interests every Jordanian and I think it is now time for the representatives of the people to shoulder their responsibilities. People who voted for them are waiting to see how the members of Parliament will treat the matter.

The issue should not be "contained" or shoved aside; based on its resolution, parliamentarians can win people's trust or lose it.

The third and most important thing is, in my opinion, the phenomenon itself. It is indeed a new and eagerly awaited for important, vital office reveals to the press, in a daring and brave way, flaws and transgressions in his ministry.

We used to hear that everything was going the right way. I believe that the sooner we start addressing our problems, no matter how difficult, the faster the world will change in the desired direction.

The minister has taken the first step in the right direction. Hopefully others will follow and with cooperation and honesty our beloved country becomes a much better place.

The voices that made themselves heard on the matter show that democracy is getting stronger and people feel safe to speak their mind. This situation gives us, the younger generation, the right to dream of a better future.

I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Malhas for his stand.

Mohammad Saleh Al Masri,
Yarmouk University,
P.O. Box 2685,
Irbid.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Features

Deputies rally behind Malhas

(Continued from page 1)

borders on paralysis" after the minister made his charges.

"We value Dr. Malhas' courageous stand... regardless of the way he (made his charges) but we demand that he present the feature of his programme for reform," said Mr. Mansour.

In a fiery speech that included the strongest criticism of the government, Ms. Faisal also lashed out at fellow deputies who sought to question the abilities of Dr. Malhas and the accuracy of the charges he made in Wednesday's session.

"All the attempts to cast doubts on what the minister has said have failed," said Ms. Faisal in criticism of the deputies who she said let the minister down in a precedent that can determine the shape of democracy in Jordan.

The case has been that deputies seek information and the government hides it from them, she said. For revealing information he has about corruption, Dr. Malhas deserves praise and support, she said.

Saying that she could list "more than a hundred reasons" for not trusting the government, Ms. Faisal said the government did not respond to the demands of the people.

Over 20 more deputies are scheduled to talk on the issue Sunday when the House resumes its debate of Dr. Malhas' allegations.

Yemeni mediation panel meets

(Continued from page 1)

safety of its leaders and the start of implementing the accord before its leaders return from their Aden stronghold to Sanaa.

The all-party committee comprises 27 members, five from each of the coalition parties the GPC, the YSP and the Islah Party, five representing the opposition parties and seven independents.

The sources said opposition parties had arranged Saturday's meeting to agree on a date and a venue for the signing.

Peres does not see accord this week

(Continued from page 1)

had authorised Peres to negotiate a final agreement with the Palestinians.

Dr. Shaath said Mr. Rabin "thinks in the short run he can wait more than we can," adding that he believed Mr. Rabin saw delay as a "bargaining tactic."

He warned, however, that such a strategy could backfire in the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

"In the long run, if he (Rabin) says 'finished, I don't want to deal,' all hell will break loose," Dr. Shaath said.

On Friday a PLO source said that before deciding whether to attend the Cairo talks Mr. Arafat was looking for a clear sign from Israel that Mr. Rabin said.

Khartoum tense after attack

(Continued from page 1)

government and the NIF very now and then," Abdul Rahman said. "They just wanted to frighten them, make them shut their mouths, stop criticising government policy."

The Umma Party of ousted Prime Minister Sadeq Al Mahdi said the real casualty toll was 28 killed and 400 wounded.

This massacre was planned and carried out by the National (Islamic) Front. Our sources tell us that the perpetrators were Sudanese and came and fled in government vehicles, the Umma party office in Cairo said in a statement.

"This dastardly crime coincided with an organised offensive against other mosques belonging to the Ansar Al Sunna in Abu Sied and Zaglouna (two Khartoum suburbs)," it added.

The Ansar Al "criticise the

Israeli soldiers kill two

(Continued from page 1)

had the following account:

The Fateh official, Iyad Abu Anza, told the Abu Nahaj clan he did not have the money for the gun. A few minutes later, 15 men from the clan, masked and armed with guns and axes, showed up at Mr. Abu Anza's house demanding payment, but were stoned by Mr. Zbu Anza and his relatives. A member of the Abu Nahaj clan opened fire, killing 32-year-old Suleiman Abu Jazar, a bystander. The victim's family took revenge by torching the Fateh office in Rafah and beating Mr. Abu Anza.

At Gaza City's Azhar University, elections to the council of the medical association were cut short Friday afternoon by about two dozen Fateh activists who smashed physicians' car windows.

The activists from the nearby Shati refugee camp demanded that the physicians observe the general strike and also wanted to protest against the arrest of one of their own by troops. The Fateh office in Gaza City issued a leaflet in which it distanced itself from the activists and said the 1,000 association members could complete balloting next week.

bordering on paralysis" after the minister made his charges.

"We value Dr. Malhas' courageous stand... regardless of the way he (made his charges) but we demand that he present the feature of his programme for reform," said Mr. Mansour.

In a fiery speech that included the strongest criticism of the government, Ms. Faisal also lashed out at fellow deputies who sought to question the abilities of Dr. Malhas and the accuracy of the charges he made in Wednesday's session.

"All the attempts to cast doubts on what the minister has said have failed," said Ms. Faisal in criticism of the deputies who she said let the minister down in a precedent that can determine the shape of democracy in Jordan.

The case has been that deputies seek information and the government hides it from them, she said. For revealing information he has about corruption, Dr. Malhas deserves praise and support, she said.

Saying that she could list "more than a hundred reasons" for not trusting the government, Ms. Faisal said the government did not respond to the demands of the people.

Over 20 more deputies are scheduled to talk on the issue Sunday when the House resumes its debate of Dr. Malhas' allegations.

By Alan Thein Durning

WASHINGTON — Two-thirds of the world's original forests have been felled, and despite a decade of well-meaning global initiatives the chainsaw is working faster than ever. Halting deforestation will require radical changes in property rights to forests, pricing of forest products and political power over the fate of forests.

Current policies in both developed and developing countries accelerate forest loss by subsidising disposal of timber at cheap prices. In the United States, for example, the federal government's Forest Service, which long denied that it was subsidising logging, said in April that it would stop selling timber from 62 of the 156 national forests it administers because they had consistently lost money on timber sales.

Trees are worth a lot more standing than as lumber. The prescription drug industry alone is estimated to earn more than \$100 billion in annual sales of drugs with active ingredients derived from forests. No one knows how many new medications may be developed from forest products as yet untested. Flood prevention, watershed stabilisation and fisheries protection services provided by forests are each worth billions of dollars a year.

Because such services fail to show up in conventional accounting systems, these benefits and the trees that provide them remain under-valued. Governments should tax, rather than subsidise, forest destruction. Then more of the value of forests would be reflected in the price of wood.

Charging visitors to U.S. national forests just \$3 per day would generate more revenue than selling timber from those forests does now. The proceeds would be a powerful incentive for the U.S. Forest

Let's put a proper price on trees

Service to preserve areas under their control instead of promoting timber cutting and mining.

The first priority for creating a sustainable forest economy is a property rights system that allies the interests of forest dwellers with the health of forest ecosystems. Reforestation initiatives in developing countries routinely fail when the forest land is under the exclusive control of the state rather than of local residents.

Thousands of recent examples show that joint management systems, in which residents benefit from forest use and protection, produce tangible results for conservation. Some 10,000 villages in India

are sharing management responsibilities in an area of about 1.5 million hectares. The concept has been gaining popularity elsewhere in Asia and in Africa.

Meanwhile, a few nations in the American tropics have taken more decisive strides towards forest tenure reform. Under intense grass-roots pressure, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela have all recognised land rights of tribes that have inhabited and conserved the forests for hundreds of years. Each of these countries has demarcated vast areas in the Amazon basin as indigenous homelands. While there are serious problems in enforcing these regulations in the face of pressures for development, it is nonetheless a hopeful sign for the world's forests.

Goods and services from the woods provide more money and jobs than chopping down trees.

The scenic and recreational benefits of forests

earn billions of dollars for both the growing nature tourism industry and local residents.

In the United States, the market

value of non-timber forest products, such as berries, decorative plants and mushrooms, may exceed that of solid wood harvest.

The market for just one forest product from Southeast Asia, rattan palm stems used to make wicker furniture, is

worth \$3 billion a year. In Belize, expert gatherers of forest products can earn between two and ten times as much per hectare as farmers who clear the trees for crops.

Without secure control of these resources, however, their potential for sustainable employment will be lost.

Ecological pricing should be the second priority for creating a sustainable forest economy.

Virgin timber is priced far below full cost.

For instance, the price of teak does not reflect the costs of flooding that rapacious teak logging has caused in Burma.

Nor does the price of old-growth fir from the U.S. Pacific Northwest include losses

suffered by the fishing industry because logging destroys salmon habitat.

These related strains are the first recourse of scientific breeders in seeking to protect crops against new pests and diseases. Export sales of coffee, cocoa beans and other commodities that trace their origins to forests in the tropics and subtropics exceeded \$20 billion in 1991.

To create a permanent forest

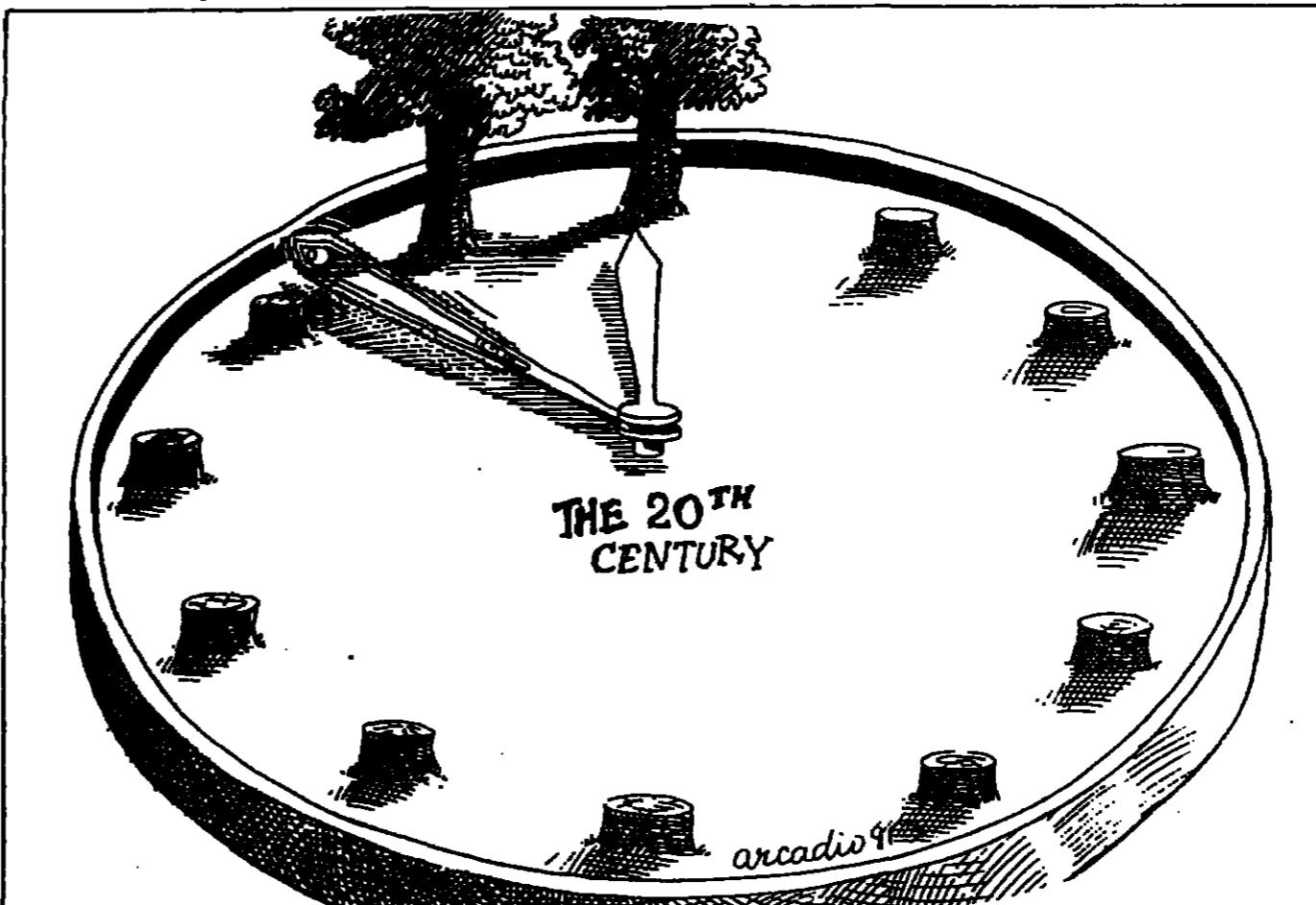
change. Unless the strong grip of big timber interests — the miners, ranchers and other resource extractors — can be broken, forest conservation will be difficult if not impossible.

In Malaysia, clear-cutting is driven by handouts of logging licences that are a major form of patronage for politicians. Officials distribute concessions to loyal supporters, who level the trees for quick profits.

In varying degrees, this bond pervades all the world's major timber economies. From 1985 to 1992 in the U.S. timber states of Washington and Oregon, the wood products industry outspent environmentalists 6-to-1 in contributions to congressional candidates. As a result, those grateful members of Congress set higher logging targets for national forests in their districts than the Forest Service itself recommended.

The ultimate challenge is to make ecological services sufficiently remunerative for all groups involved — residents, logging towns and government agencies — so that they act as defenders, not destroyers, of forests.

The writer is a researcher for Worldwatch Institute in Washington and author of "Saving the Forests: What Will It Take?" This article is reprinted from the International Herald Tribune.



Gaza workers live in hovels, work on palaces

By John West
Reuter

side Israel, or foreigners," he said.

Mohammad Madoukh of the Palestinian Trade Union Federation estimated about 13,000 Gazans now cross Erez checkpoint to work in Israel every day. Israel's civil-run administration quotes a higher figure of 23,000 workers with work permits from 23,000 workers with work permits from other passengers, made a three-km detour into the city's plus Ramat Gan suburb to lose the police car.

"Of course we do have permits, but look, we've saved ourselves the walk," Fathi explained as he got off the bus. "Getting bread in your mouth is all about deception."

The 34-year-old college graduate spends more than five hours a day commuting between the million-dollar villa in Israel he is working on as a tiler and the room with a leaky iron roof in Gaza, where he sleeps with his wife and four children.

Under the new system, Palestinians are granted work permits only when a specific Israeli employer asks for them by name. They can travel only by specially licensed buses.

Workers are thrown into a chaotic and murky world of scams and alliances in order to get and keep jobs — and get paid by unscrupulous bosses.

Under a complicated administration which few of them understand, they fall prey to huge taxes and rampant bureaucracy where Palestinians allege corruption is widespread.

At Erez checkpoint in the cold dark of a winter's morning, thousands of workers stand blearily in line waiting to present permits to Israeli soldiers.

Hundreds of hawkers work the queues selling tea and sandwiches in the liveliest street market in Gaza — recognition of the migrants' buying power.

Dark shadows flicker in a nearby orchard, as men run between trees, hiding and waiting for Israeli border police sitting in jeeps to be distracted for even a few seconds to give them the chance to scale the perimeter fence and cut through razor wire.

Palestinians say others hide in bus luggage compartments and car boots, sometimes smuggled across for a fee by Israeli settlers.

Fathi, who earns about 80 shekels (\$25) a day, recalls how he once got back almost 6,000 shekels (\$2,000) from an employer who refused to pay him.

The Palestinian impersonated an Israeli to get past security guards in the man's

Opponents seen unlikely to derail S. African vote

By Rodney Pinder
Reuter

JOHANNESBURG — Militant whites and Inkatha Zulus opposing South Africa's first all-race election in April pose the threat of increased violence but will not derail the vote or negate the result, analysts say.

The white right could attack polling booths, voters and the black-led government certain to emerge, and there could be a wider uprising from disaffected Zulus in Natal province and in migrant worker hostels elsewhere.

But diplomatic and political experts predict the security forces, backed by the African National Congress (ANC) of Nelson Mandela, and the National Party of President F.W. de Klerk, will hold the line nationally, ensuring the election is judged broadly free and fair by the world.

Under the new system, workers are granted work permits only when a specific Israeli employer asks for them by name. They can travel only by specially licensed buses.

Workers are thrown into a chaotic and murky world of scams and alliances in order to get and keep jobs — and get paid by unscrupulous bosses.

Under a complicated administration which few of them understand, they fall prey to huge taxes and rampant bureaucracy where Palestinians allege corruption is widespread.

At Erez checkpoint in the cold dark of a winter's morning, thousands of workers stand blearily in line waiting to present permits to Israeli soldiers.

Hundreds of hawkers work the queues selling tea and sandwiches in the liveliest street market in Gaza — recognition of the migrants' buying power.

Dark shadows flicker in a nearby orchard, as men run between trees, hiding and waiting for Israeli border police sitting in jeeps to be distracted for even a few seconds to give them the chance to scale the perimeter fence and cut through razor wire.

Palestinians say others hide in bus luggage compartments and car boots, sometimes smuggled across for a fee by Israeli settlers.

Fathi, who earns about 80 shekels (\$25) a day, recalls how he once got back almost 6,000 shekels (\$2,000) from an employer who refused to pay him.

The Palestinian impersonated an Israeli to get past security guards in the man's

office and enlisting the help of another Israeli contractor, of Libyan origin, to threaten legal action.

"Me and the Libyans, we're not exactly friends, neither of us calls the other one to ask after his health. But we're good allies. He helped me because he knows I can bring him a good team of workers whenever he needs one," he said.

A group of workers gathered in his house complain for hours about getting up early, the fines they pay, the hard work and the humiliation of being ordered about by Israeli foremen they regard as lazier, more stupid and better paid than them.

But the white right could attack polling booths, voters and the black-led government certain to emerge, and there could be a wider uprising from disaffected Zulus in Natal province and in migrant worker hostels elsewhere.

But the white right could attack polling booths, voters and the black-led government certain to emerge, and there could be a wider uprising from disaffected Zulus in Natal province and in migrant worker hostels elsewhere.

Analysts cautioned against too much gloom following the latest deadlock in constitutional negotiations between the government and ANC on the one hand and the Freedom Alliance, mainly comprising conservative whites and the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party of Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi.

Although prospects for an ideal all-inclusive election look bleak now, contacts will continue behind the scenes. Mr. de Klerk has said consistently that disaffected parties will be able to join in right up to April 27, the first voting day.

Sources close to negotiations say government and ANC efforts will focus on the position of Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini and other Zulu leaders apart from Dr. Buthelezi, and possible splits in the white right between war-

lords and moderates.

White attacks on key installations such as power supplies and election booths could test the loyalty of the white-led security forces to the new order. But analysts generally expect the professional ranks of the armed forces to hold.

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East providing education, health and relief and social services to Palestine refugees requires a

REALITY DATA BASE ADMINISTRATOR
for its Supply Division based initially at its headquarters in Vienna and after July 1, 1995, in Amman. The incumbent will be responsible for the set up and maintenance of all support files in REALITY (a purchasing and materials management software system), including item master catalogue, vendor lists, address lists, currency tables, etc. He/she will also provide on-the-job training to Supply Division staff on the use of REALITY and act as first line support for users. The ideal candidate will have extensive experience in the management of PC data base applications and familiarity with purchasing and supply procedures.

Essential qualifications are:

1. University degree in business administration or computer science, or a related subject.

2. Minimum

Pyongyang warns U.S. would lose another Korean war

TOKYO (Agencies) — North Korea warned the United States Saturday that it would be humbled and defeated if it started another Korean war.

An analysis carried on the official North Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), monitored in Tokyo, said the United States was readying itself for war "under the guise of aiming for peace on the Korean peninsula."

"With the insidious intention to unleash a new war in Korea, United States is stepping up its arms buildup in and around South Korea and engrossing itself in military espionage, watching for a chance of a surprise strike at the DPRK," the KCNA commentary said.

The Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (DPRK) is the official name of the North Korea state.

"Military moves and anti-DPRK rows of the U.S. war-thirsty quarters have become all the more undisguised entering the new year," it added.

The United States, it said, would "suffer a more tragic and grave defeat than in the past Korean War in which it was humbled and bruised all over."

Last month, the Communist state reacted angrily to a U.S.-South Korean plan to deploy Patriot air-defence missiles in the South to bolster Seoul's defences.

Pyongyang has also stridently objected to joint U.S.-South Korean military exercises on the peninsula.

North Korea has been under

intense international pressure to allow inspection of its nuclear facilities which the United States and its allies believe are aimed at weapons development. Pyongyang has said its nuclear programme is peaceful.

"No military pressure and strong arm can ever work on the Korean people," KCNA said. "Our people who know of the vulnerability of the United States better than anyone else and have the experience of fighting it for three years regard it not as a superpower but as a bluffing paper tiger."

A U.S.-led 16-nation force under the United Nations flag engaged troops from North Korea, and later China, during the 1950-53 Korea War which most historians consider was started by the North's invasion of the South.

The war ended with a armistice which has left the divided peninsula the world's last remaining cold war flashpoint.

North Korea angrily denied Saturday a U.S. State Department report released this week charging it with violation of human rights.

"This is a brazen interference in the internal affairs of our country and an intolerable insult to the Socialist system of our style centering on the popular masses," the KCNA said.

The U.S. report follows a similar report last October by Amnesty International which said Pyongyang's Stalinist rulers tortured or executed thousands of people over the past 30 years and detained tens

of thousands more.

"These gross human rights violations continue today," the London-based Amnesty says in a bleak report on the secretive Asian state which describes itself as "paradise on earth". Saturday's KCNA despatch, monitored in Tokyo, went on.

The DPRK government, which regards it as its immovable policy to value man and respect his rights, substantially provides genuine freedom and rights to all citizens and creditably ensures their abundant and happy life."

South Korean Foreign Minister Hong Soon-Young told reporters Saturday: "The door will be always open to dialogue even if sanctions (against the North) are imposed."

"Concerns among IAEA's governors are mounting over the North's refusal to accept both special and regular inspections," the South Korean envoy to IAEA, Lee See-Young, told reporters in Seoul.

If the North's hardline nuclear stance remains unchanged by Feb. 21, the agency's director general, Hans Blix, will tell the Security Council that the agency is no longer able to ensure nuclear materials declared by Pyongyang are being used solely for peaceful purposes, Mr. Lee said.

"We can't rule out the possibility that we will be placed in an extreme situation in which resolute steps are taken to resolve North Korea's nuclear problem," Mr. Han told a meeting of South Korean heads of foreign missions.

Mr. Han, however, said that Seoul would not give up efforts to resolve the row through dialogue even in the event the confrontation over the North's nuclear programme worsens.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is expected to declare North Korea in breach of a nuclear safeguards pact later this month unless Pyongyang agrees to open up suspect nuclear sites to inspection, South Korean officials said.

The U.N. nuclear watchdog

would have no alternative but to pass the issue on to the Security Council for punitive steps against the North, including economic sanctions, they said.

Mr. Han plans to visit Washington from Feb. 16 to 19 during which he will meet President Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher to coordinate joint measures to tackle the North's nuclear issue, a ministry spokesman said.

Vice South Korean Foreign Minister Hong Soon-Young told reporters Saturday: "The door will be always open to dialogue even if sanctions (against the North) are imposed."

"Concerns among IAEA's governors are mounting over the North's refusal to accept both special and regular inspections," the South Korean envoy to IAEA, Lee See-Young, told reporters in Seoul.

If the North's hardline nuclear stance remains unchanged by Feb. 21, the agency's director general, Hans Blix, will tell the Security Council that the agency is no longer able to ensure nuclear materials declared by Pyongyang are being used solely for peaceful purposes, Mr. Lee said.

"We can't rule out the possibility that we will be placed in an extreme situation in which resolute steps are taken to resolve North Korea's nuclear problem," Mr. Han told a meeting of South Korean heads of foreign missions.

Mr. Han, however, said that Seoul would not give up efforts to resolve the row through dialogue even in the event the confrontation over the North's nuclear programme worsens.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is expected to declare North Korea in breach of a nuclear safeguards pact later this month unless Pyongyang agrees to open up suspect nuclear sites to inspection, South Korean officials said.

The U.N. nuclear watchdog



African National Congress President Nelson Mandela holds a baby as he walks to an election rally in Paarl, South Africa (AFP photo)

Mandela: Rightwingers are playing with fire

ODENDAALS RUS. South Africa (Agencies) — ANC leader Nelson Mandela Saturday told South African white rightwingers they were playing with fire by committing acts of violence in the run-up to elections in April.

"Innocent people, both black and white, are going to die as a result of what Ferdi Hartzberg, General Constant Viljoen are doing," Mr. Mandela told about 200 nurses and doctors at Thabong Hospital.

Mr. Hartzberg leads the pro-apartheid Conservative Party and Gen. Viljoen heads the rightwing alliance Afrikaner Volksfront.

"We are trying very hard to dampen this violence, to appeal to all reasonable South Africans: Let us save our country," Mr. Mandela said.

Mr. Mandela, on the second day of a campaign visit to the Orange Free State maize and mining belt, said the African National Congress (ANC) had already gone through a war and would not wish anything like that to happen again.

"We want to make peace in this country. Peace with Afrikaner leaders to form a new South Africa. We must work out the solution together," Mr. Mandela said.

A spokesman said owners of other stores in the city centre had been asked to check their premises for incendiary devices.

The firebomb attack is the latest in a concerted campaign, thought by police to be the work of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), against commercial premises throughout the province that began two days after Christmas.

At the hospital, a nurse pinned a red rose to Mr. Mandela's shirt. Hospital sister Marieta Clark, an Afrikaner, said she was very excited at meeting Mr. Mandela and "everybody in the hospital felt that way."

Mr. Mandela's speech in the hospital was punctuated with

cries of "amanda" (power) and "yes, yes," when he made points people agreed with, which was most of the time.

Before speaking, Mr. Mandela was mobbed by crowds of supporters in Kuthwanong township, where he told people that free education for primary school pupils would be the top priority of the government of national unity emerging after the elections.

Mr. Mandala addressed the crowd from the back of a pick-up surrounded by thousands standing in a sea of mud.

He reached down to shake an old man's hand, prompting those at the back of the crowd to surge forward. Security men had to force them back.

One woman who managed to grab his arm told those around her that she was not going to wash her hand for six months.

Placards carried by the crowds proclaimed: "one president one Mandela," "Houses for all" and "welcome people's president."

Teacher Mataphelo Sekane, 25, said that she and most of her colleagues would vote for Mr. Mandela in the election.

"We think he is brilliant," she said.

Mr. Mandela Friday accused President F.W. De Clerk of cowardice and paralysis in the face of threats and bombings by white extremists.

On the first day of a three-day campaign trip to the Orange Free State, a stronghold of right-wingers who have vowed to fight probable black rule after the country's first multiracial elections in April, Mr. Mandela said Mr. De Clerk and the governing National Party remained silent about increased right-wing violence.

Shell kills at least 36 in worst Bosnian atrocity

SARAJEVO (R) — A shell slammed into Sarajevo's main open air market Saturday, killing at least 36 people and wounding dozens in the single atrocity of Bosnia's 22-month civil war.

Doctors said mangled corpses were still arriving at hospitals and morgues and the death toll was expected to continue rising.

The flood of wounded men, women and children overwhelmed medical teams at hospitals where the wounded lay moaning on corridor floors.

Many survivors were carried in blankets aboard commandeered private cars. The dead were brought on the back of trucks.

The shell hit a table in the middle of the crowded market in Sarajevo's battered old town at around 1130 GMT. The dead and wounded were strewn in pools of blood among the aisles between the stalls of meagre produce.

"Some people were literally torn apart," one eyewitness said. "Heads and limbs were ripped off bodies."

It happened a day after besieging Serbs, who have been hammering Sarajevo with artillery and mortar fire all week, killed nine Muslims queuing for food aid in the Sarajevo suburb of Dobrinje.

General Sir Michael Rose, the commander of U.N. peacekeepers in Bosnia, Saturday brushed aside Bosnian Serb denials that they were responsible for the Dobrinje slaughter.

"The analysis of the craters indicates with certainty that the mortars were fired from Bosnian Serb positions," Gen. Rose said in a statement made in French.

"I don't accept the Serb denial, firing into such a populated area is unacceptable. Those responsible must be confronted with their criminal actions."

The Bosnian Serb army and Nikola Koljevic, vice president of the self-proclaimed Bosnian Serb Republic had claimed the Dobrinje attack was carried out by the Muslims themselves to curry world sympathy.

Reports by U.N. Military Observers (UNMOS) have shown that almost all the shelling in Sarajevo this week has been carried out by Serb forces besieging the Bosnian capital.

U.N. spokesman Major Jose Labandeira told reporters the Serb pour 200 artillery rounds on Sarajevo Friday alone. UNMOS did not see any return artillery fire by government forces.

Previous shelling incidents in Sarajevo have inflicted heavy death tolls but none so high as this.

The killing in a mortar attack of 16 people in what became known as the bread queue massacre in May 1992 helped convince the United Nations to impose sanctions on Serb-led Yugoslavia.

Demi Moore gives birth to 3rd child, a daughter

LOS ANGELES (R) — Demi Moore has given birth to her third daughter, a spokeswoman for the actress and her actor-husband Bruce Willis said Friday. The baby, which was born Thursday, was named Tallulah Belle. The couple's other children are Rumer, 5, and Scout, 2. "Both mother and baby are doing fantastic," the spokeswoman's statement said.

Argentine judge shuts down bogus hair-loss clinics

Buenos Aires (AFP) — A former machinist who hired unemployed steelworkers and founded two hair-loss clinics was forced out of business Friday by an Argentine judge for posing as a doctor. The judge said the Buenos Aires entrepreneur was also using medication that had not been authorised by the government.

Man jailed for defacing Jackson's star

LOS ANGELES (R) — A man who said he spray-painted Michael Jackson's star on the Hollywood walk of fame because he hated "child molesters" pleaded no-contest to a vandalism charge and was sentenced to 100 days in jail. Joe Gomez, 33, was arrested Tuesday after a passer-by witnessed him spraying the singer's star — a bronze plaque embedded in the sidewalk — with fluorescent orange paint. The witness, Edward Lees, chased Mr. Gomez, caught him and turned him over to police. At a court hearing, deputy city attorney Bill Sterling said Mr. Gomez told investigators: "I sprayed his star because I hate child molesters. I hate Michael Jackson because he molests little kids."

The incident occurred a week after Jackson reached a settlement with a 14-year-old boy who accused him of sexual molestation, agreeing to pay the child millions of dollars.

Jackson's attorneys said the settlement was not an admission of guilt and continued to maintain his innocence. The 35-year-old entertainer is still under investigation by prosecutors in Los Angeles and Santa Barbara County, the site of his Neverland ranch.

Cold snap saves 6-day-old finger

BEIJING (R) — Chinese doctors have successfully reattached worker's finger six days after it was severed thanks to a "medical miracle" made possible by extremely cold weather, the official China Daily said Saturday. The man was unable to seek treatment from a local air force hospital until almost a week after his accident because of poor transportation, the newspaper said. "However, he was wise enough to put the cut finger in a plastic bag and store it outdoors, where the temperature was 20 degrees below zero," the newspaper said.

Celebrities strip for 'safe sex'

NEW YORK (R) — Of all the fund-raising campaigns to promote safe sex, Playboy has come up with a unique one, in which celebrities take off their clothes to help fight AIDS.

The pictorial in the upcoming March issue, includes erotic photos of actresses Sonia Braga, Mariel Hemingway, Sandra Bernhard and Shannen Doherty, the only one featured in colour. The stars are quoted discussing the virtues of safe sex and condoms. Bernhard says: "there's nothing I enjoy more than buying condoms!"

The pictures are to be included in two large books and a series of auctions in the United States and Europe.

Kerrigan-Harding photo goes on block

NEW YORK (R) — For some one wishing to own a part of what is certain to become television movie history, Christie's said it is planning to auction a picture of Nancy Kerrigan and Tonya Harding, signed by both skaters. Christie's said the picture is expected to go for a modest \$800 to \$1,000. The picture also includes 1992 Olympic gold medalist Kristi Yamaguchi, who also signed it.

Christie's notes that the two skaters have been getting international headlines since the Jan. 6 attack on Kerrigan. Harding's ex-husband, Jeff Gillooly, has been charged in planning the attack.

Cambodian leaders cheer troops on base capture

PHNOM PENH (Agencies) — The Cambodian co-premiers congratulated government forces Saturday for the successful capture of a major rebel Khmer Rouge base in north-west Cambodia.

Prince Norodom Ranariddh and Hun Sen congratulated the troops for seizing the Khmer Rouge's logistics and residential base at Anlong Veng, near the Thai border, in Siem Reap province.

Anlong Veng was the radical faction's headquarters for all guerrilla operations in North and central Cambodia.

"The capture of Anlong Veng cuts off the main supplies of the Khmer Rouge group who have created disturbances. Insecurity and provoked turmoil," the co-premiers said a statement.

Prince Ranariddh said earlier that government troops had almost total control of the base and surrounding area.

The prince did not give casualty figures. But Mr. Hun Sen said Thursday a three-pronged troop movement had reached the Khmer Rouge base, with 10 soldiers killed and more than 10 wounded, mostly by mines.

But another government source privately admitted that mines had taken a "heavy toll," both during the troop build-up in the area over the past weeks and during the actual advance itself.

A Khmer Rouge official in Phnom Penh, who demanded anonymity, said he had received a fax Saturday afternoon from the base saying it had come under heavy fire but

Firebomb causes Belfast store blaze

BELFAST (Agencies) — An incendiary device exploded at a large store in the centre of Belfast early Saturday, causing a fire that was later extinguished, local police said.

Police said the fire had been restricted to the first floor, where although the sprinkler system had been effective it had left considerable water damage.

A spokesman said the firebomb had been placed in Woolworth's in the Cormakar market causing fire to break out at about 12:30 a.m. (0030 GMT). The blaze was later extinguished by emergency services.

Police said the fire had been restricted to the first floor, where although the sprinkler system had been effective it had left considerable water damage.

"We want to make peace in this country. Peace with Afrikaner leaders to form a new South Africa. We must work out the solution together," Mr. Mandela said.

The firebomb attack is the latest in a concerted campaign, thought by police to be the work of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), against commercial premises throughout the province that began two days after Christmas.

At the hospital, a nurse pinned a red rose to Mr. Mandela's shirt. Hospital sister Marieta Clark, an Afrikaner, said she was very excited at meeting Mr. Mandela and "everybody in the hospital felt that way."

Mr. Mandela's speech in the hospital was punctuated with

cries of "amanda" (power) and "yes, yes," when he made points people agreed with, which was most of the time.

Ms. Bhutto urged the international community to get the U.N. resolutions on Kashmir implemented.

Sports

Schneider takes slalom with supreme second leg

SIERRA NEVADA (R) — Spain (R) — Switzerland's Vreni Schneider showed her class with a blistering second leg to win a women's slalom Saturday.

Showing brilliant control down a steep and difficult course, she finished almost a second and a half ahead of her nearest rival, Sweden's Pernilla Wiberg.

"This was one of the best races of my career," said a delighted Schneider, celebrating her 49th World Cup victory.

Schneider, who was visibly upset this week by the death of her friend Ulrike Maier in last Saturday's downhill in Germany, had turned in a modest first leg performance, 1.93 seconds and in 11th place behind surprise leader Roberta Serra of Italy.

But she charged down the second leg in just 48.88 seconds, well ahead of the next fastest time of 50.38 turned in by Wiberg.

"I think I had too much respect for the course in the

first leg, it looked like it was difficult," said Schneider.

"But when I saw how much faster the others had gone I was sure I could make up the difference on the second leg."

Schneider, 29, did a combined time of one minute 41.30 seconds, to Wiberg's 1:42.66 and 1:42.70 by Deborah Compagnon of Italy.

Wiberg stays top of the overall standings on 1,209 points after claiming victory in the combined event following her 10th place finish in Wednesday's downhill here. Schneider, second in the combined, is on 1,190 points.

Action resumes on Sunday with a super-G event.

The Italians had looked like dominating Saturday's race after the first leg, with Compagnon well poised with a joint second fastest time.

Serra, ranked only 17th in the slalom standings before Saturday, had shaken the favourites with a courageous first leg that left her almost a second ahead of her nearest rivals.

She charged down the second leg in just 48.88 seconds, well ahead of the next fastest time of 50.38 turned in by Wiberg.

"I think I had too much respect for the course in the

Gustafsson beats Volkov, meets Bruguera in final

DUBAI (R) — Magnus Gustafsson, his concentration enhanced by transcendental mediation, blasted Alexander Volkov aside 6-2, 6-2 to reach the final of the \$1 million Dubai Open Saturday.

The fourth-seeded Swede will meet number one seed Sergi Bruguera of Spain, who won the other semifinal 6-2, 6-1 against South African Wayne Ferreira, in Sunday's final.

Gustafsson, who has been practising mediation for two months, was in complete command right from the start and Volkov had no answer to his powerful serves and cross court

shots.

He broke the Russian in the opening game, then again for a 3-1 lead, going on to take the first set 6-2 when Volkov failed to capitalise on four break points while trailing 2-5.

"I feel full of energy these days and mediation twice a day for 20 minutes helps me concentrate much better," Gustafsson, ranked twelfth in the world, said.

"I kept attacking his backhand and that tactic forced him to make unforced errors. For Volkov it was one of those days when he just failed to lift his game."

Richard Pound of Canada, a member of the IOC, said Gustafsson should be allowed to compete in Norway unless she is convinced by a U.S. court of conspiring to attack Nancy Kerrigan.

But the embattled Harding, who has not been charged in the attack, Friday received a boost from a prominent member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) who is already in Lillehammer, Norway, for the start of the winter games next Saturday.

Richard Pound of Canada, a member of the IOC, said Gustafsson should be allowed to compete in Norway unless she is convinced by a U.S. court of conspiring to attack Nancy Kerrigan or confesses a role in planning the assault.

"In fact, the USOC 'doesn't have much of a choice' but to

keep Harding on the team,

suspend Harding's USFSA membership — or simply inform the USOC and let it make its own decision.

"Unless you have got compelling evidence, such as a confession or a conviction, you don't have a basis on which to overturn the results," of the U.S. Figure Skating championships. "It would be very risky in terms of (denying) due process, and all of those other things (Americans) hold dear.

A five-member USFSA panel, along with a Portland sheriff's deputy, a Portland attorney who gathered evidence for the USFSA, and several others, met here for 5½ hours to pore over affidavits, FBI reports and additional documents.

That judgement will be passed along to USFSA President Claire Ferguson, who may take action against Harding — call for a disciplinary hearing or

Hiding Maradona barred from leaving Argentina

BUENOS AIRES (R) — Soccer star Diego Maradona, in hiding after firing an air rifle at reporters, was barred from leaving Argentina until the court rule on charges filed by his victims, a judge has said.

"He cannot leave the country," Judge Francisco Lito, in charge of the case, told Reuters. "He must settle his judicial situation first."

The diminutive captain of Argentina's national side and his family fled their country home in a pick-up truck under cover of darkness early Thursday, escaping a siege by a press corps at war with him over the air gun shots.

His lawyers would not say where he was but assured reporters that he would show up for questioning when needed.

Judge Lito said he had summoned Maradona to appear Tuesday before his court in Mercedes, 40 kilometers northwest of Buenos Aires.

Maradona, 33, lost his temper and started firing pellets from an air gun at journalists standing at the wrought-iron gates of his country home this week after he was sacked by his club, Newell's Old Boys, for repeatedly missing practice sessions.

Police raided his five-acre residence after the incident but found no trace of the gun, which had been seen repeatedly in television footage from the scene.

The attack earned Maradona his second fingerprinting since he was briefly held on drug charges following a raid



A cameraman and reporter from a Buenos Aires television station are sprayed with water Wednesday at the home of soccer star Diego Maradona. Journalists who were hoping to interview Maradona after he quit his club said that the Argentine soccer star and five other men fired at them with air-powered pellet guns (AFP photo).

on a Buenos Aires apartment in 1991.

The main Buenos Aires dailies have described Maradona as virtually deranged and Argentina's most influential journalist, Bernardo Neustadt, has warned him that he will not get off lightly after taking on the local press.

Judge Lito said Maradona, who threatened at one point to switch from the air gun to real bullets, would not be arrested because the charges — bodily harm and minor injuries — carry a maximum two-year prison sentence which is not usually enforceable.

Maradona's career has been in decline since the 1990 World Cup in Italy. He failed a routine dope test for cocaine while playing for Napoli in March 1991 and was banned for 15 months by FIFA, world soccer's governing body.

He returned to Argentina, declared he had retired and entered a treatment programme.

He came out of retirement in Spain with Sevilla last season but was sacked in June and returned again to Argentina.

After a four-month break followed by an intense slimming and fitness programme, Maradona signed with Newell's Old Boys in October, then inspired Argentina to victory over Australia in a critical World Cup playoff.

Maradona said before his clash with reporters that he planned to continue playing despite having been fired, and looked forward to the World Cup in the United States later this year.

IOC says let Harding skate

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. (AP) — The U.S. Figure Skating Association was expected to decide late Saturday if it will recommend a disciplinary hearing for Tonya Harding for her alleged role in the attack on Olympic rival Nancy Kerrigan.

It is unclear whether a suspension of Harding, pending the completion of the appeal process, would be enough to keep her off the team.

Harding and her attorneys snubbed a request by the panel to appear Friday.

Harding has not been charged with any crime in a case that has already brought a guilty plea from her ex-husband and the arrests of three other men.

Anita DeFrantz, the lone U.S. member on the IOC, said the group probably would not seek to bar Harding from the Olympics.

The IOC has the final authority during the games so if it (the Harding controversy) continues, that's a possibility, but I think that's very unlikely," she said.

In other quarterfinal results, sixth-seed Renzo Furlan of Italy, outlasted American Jeff Tarango 1-6, 6-1, 7-5, and fifth-seed Karsten Braasch of Germany stopped American Bryan Shelton, 6-4, 6-4.

In the semifinals, Chang will play Braasch, while Reneberg faces Furlan.

"It was a pretty up-and-down match," said Chang, who served nine aces and one double fault. "I got off to another slow start, but really thought I had a pretty good chance to win in straight sets, when I went up 5-3.

"It seems whenever I was ahead, he just seemed to hit winners," added Chang, a two-time winner here. "It was a

little frustrating.

"In the third set, I kind of played in between I basically just waited for him to miss. He's a great player and today was just a grind, basically."

After rallying from a 3-0 deficit, Chang wasted two set points at 5-3 and two more at 6-5.

Chang, the top seed and the world's ninth-ranked player, survived an upset bid by hard-hitting Jean-Philippe Fleurant, before beating the unseeded Frenchman, 6-7 (6-8) 6-1, 6-3 in two hours, 53 minutes. Meanwhile, the second-seeded Reneberg, overcame an ailing shoulder, to rally past compatriot and rookie pro Brian Macphie, 3-6, 6-4, 6-2.

In other quarterfinal results, sixth-seed Renzo Furlan of Italy, outlasted American Jeff Tarango 1-6, 6-1, 7-5, and fifth-seed Karsten Braasch of Germany stopped American Bryan Shelton, 6-4, 6-4.

In the semifinals, Chang will play Braasch, while Reneberg faces Furlan.

"It was a pretty up-and-down match," said Chang, who served nine aces and one double fault. "I got off to another slow start, but really thought I had a pretty good chance to win in straight sets, when I went up 5-3.

"It seems whenever I was ahead, he just seemed to hit winners," added Chang, a two-time winner here. "It was a

little frustrating.

"In the third set, I kind of played in between I basically just waited for him to miss. He's a great player and today was just a grind, basically."

After rallying from a 3-0 deficit, Chang wasted two set points at 5-3 and two more at 6-5.

Chang, the top seed and the world's ninth-ranked player, survived an upset bid by hard-hitting Jean-Philippe Fleurant, before beating the unseeded Frenchman, 6-7 (6-8) 6-1, 6-3 in two hours, 53 minutes. Meanwhile, the second-seeded Reneberg, overcame an ailing shoulder, to rally past compatriot and rookie pro Brian Macphie, 3-6, 6-4, 6-2.

In other quarterfinal results, sixth-seed Renzo Furlan of Italy, outlasted American Jeff Tarango 1-6, 6-1, 7-5, and fifth-seed Karsten Braasch of Germany stopped American Bryan Shelton, 6-4, 6-4.

In the semifinals, Chang will play Braasch, while Reneberg faces Furlan.

"It was a pretty up-and-down match," said Chang, who served nine aces and one double fault. "I got off to another slow start, but really thought I had a pretty good chance to win in straight sets, when I went up 5-3.

"It seems whenever I was ahead, he just seemed to hit winners," added Chang, a two-time winner here. "It was a

little frustrating.

"In the third set, I kind of played in between I basically just waited for him to miss. He's a great player and today was just a grind, basically."

After rallying from a 3-0 deficit, Chang wasted two set points at 5-3 and two more at 6-5.

Chang, the top seed and the world's ninth-ranked player, survived an upset bid by hard-hitting Jean-Philippe Fleurant, before beating the unseeded Frenchman, 6-7 (6-8) 6-1, 6-3 in two hours, 53 minutes. Meanwhile, the second-seeded Reneberg, overcame an ailing shoulder, to rally past compatriot and rookie pro Brian Macphie, 3-6, 6-4, 6-2.

In other quarterfinal results, sixth-seed Renzo Furlan of Italy, outlasted American Jeff Tarango 1-6, 6-1, 7-5, and fifth-seed Karsten Braasch of Germany stopped American Bryan Shelton, 6-4, 6-4.

In the semifinals, Chang will play Braasch, while Reneberg faces Furlan.

"It was a pretty up-and-down match," said Chang, who served nine aces and one double fault. "I got off to another slow start, but really thought I had a pretty good chance to win in straight sets, when I went up 5-3.

"It seems whenever I was ahead, he just seemed to hit winners," added Chang, a two-time winner here. "It was a

little frustrating.

"In the third set, I kind of played in between I basically just waited for him to miss. He's a great player and today was just a grind, basically."

After rallying from a 3-0 deficit, Chang wasted two set points at 5-3 and two more at 6-5.

Chang, the top seed and the world's ninth-ranked player, survived an upset bid by hard-hitting Jean-Philippe Fleurant, before beating the unseeded Frenchman, 6-7 (6-8) 6-1, 6-3 in two hours, 53 minutes. Meanwhile, the second-seeded Reneberg, overcame an ailing shoulder, to rally past compatriot and rookie pro Brian Macphie, 3-6, 6-4, 6-2.

In other quarterfinal results, sixth-seed Renzo Furlan of Italy, outlasted American Jeff Tarango 1-6, 6-1, 7-5, and fifth-seed Karsten Braasch of Germany stopped American Bryan Shelton, 6-4, 6-4.

In the semifinals, Chang will play Braasch, while Reneberg faces Furlan.

"It was a pretty up-and-down match," said Chang, who served nine aces and one double fault. "I got off to another slow start, but really thought I had a pretty good chance to win in straight sets, when I went up 5-3.

"It seems whenever I was ahead, he just seemed to hit winners," added Chang, a two-time winner here. "It was a

little frustrating.

"In the third set, I kind of played in between I basically just waited for him to miss. He's a great player and today was just a grind, basically."

After rallying from a 3-0 deficit, Chang wasted two set points at 5-3 and two more at 6-5.

Chang, the top seed and the world's ninth-ranked player, survived an upset bid by hard-hitting Jean-Philippe Fleurant, before beating the unseeded Frenchman, 6-7 (6-8) 6-1, 6-3 in two hours, 53 minutes. Meanwhile, the second-seeded Reneberg, overcame an ailing shoulder, to rally past compatriot and rookie pro Brian Macphie, 3-6, 6-4, 6-2.

In other quarterfinal results, sixth-seed Renzo Furlan of Italy, outlasted American Jeff Tarango 1-6, 6-1, 7-5, and fifth-seed Karsten Braasch of Germany stopped American Bryan Shelton, 6-4, 6-4.

In the semifinals, Chang will play Braasch, while Reneberg faces Furlan.

"It was a pretty up-and-down match," said Chang, who served nine aces and one double fault. "I got off to another slow start, but really thought I had a pretty good chance to win in straight sets, when I went up 5-3.

"It seems whenever I was ahead, he just seemed to hit winners," added Chang, a two-time winner here. "It was a

little frustrating.

"In the third set, I kind of played in between I basically just waited for him to miss. He's a great player and today was just a grind, basically."

After rallying from a 3-0 deficit, Chang wasted two set points at 5-3 and two more at 6-5.

Chang, the top seed and the world's ninth-ranked player, survived an upset bid by hard-hitting Jean-Philippe Fleurant, before beating the unseeded Frenchman, 6-7 (6-8) 6-1, 6-3 in two hours, 53 minutes. Meanwhile, the second-seeded Reneberg, overcame an ailing shoulder, to rally past compatriot and rookie pro Brian Macphie, 3-6, 6-4, 6-2.

In other quarterfinal results, sixth-seed Renzo Furlan of Italy, outlasted American Jeff Tarango 1-6, 6-1, 7-5, and fifth-seed Karsten Braasch of Germany stopped American Bryan Shelton, 6-4, 6-4.

In the semifinals, Chang will play Braasch, while Reneberg faces Furlan.

"It was a pretty up-and-down match," said Chang,

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran interior minister gets bigger role

NICOSIA (R) — Iran's interior minister has been given greater powers over internal security, Iranian radio reported on Saturday. The radio said Iran's spiritual leader and armed forces commander Ayatollah Ali Khamenei had made the minister, Ali Aghdam Besharati, his deputy with responsibility for police, according to the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), quoted a decree by Ayatollah Khamenei as saying the move aimed "to give the interior minister greater national power in establishing the people's security and welfare."

"On Tuesday a man fired five shots while Mr. Raisi was giving a speech in Tehran," Iranian officials said it was a plot to kill Mr. Raisi. Two weeks ago saw rioting and gun battles in the southeastern town of Zahedan between security personnel and minority Sunni Muslims, according to local residents, as well as the killing of four bus passengers by bandits in the same area.

India test-fires surface-to-air missile

NEW DELHI (AP) — Ignoring pressure from Western countries to scrap its missile programme, India on Friday test-fired its latest long-range surface-to-air missile, a news agency reported. The missile named Akash, the Hindi word for sky, was successfully fired at the Chandipur test range in the eastern coastal state of Orissa, the Defence Ministry said. The 650-kilogramme missile is fitted with multiple warheads, Press Trust of India news agency said quoting a Defence Ministry statement. The successful firing of Akash puts India's missile technology on par with the United States, Russia and France, United News of India news agency said. Akash is part of a \$285 million programme to develop medium and long-range air defence and surface-to-surface ballistic missiles. India has been enhancing its military power through its missile programme, fueling concern among Western countries over its ability to conduct nuclear war against neighbouring Pakistan, which also has nuclear capability.

Brown's chief accuser cries 'coverup'

MIAMI (AP) — Commerce Secretary Ron Brown's chief accuser claimed Friday that grand jurors investigating the cabinet official were not allowed to vote on an indictment, and may not have seen his bank records. The Justice Department exonerated Mr. Brown this week of accusations he secretly accepted \$700,000 from the Vietnamese government to help lift the U.S. trade embargo. President Bill Clinton announced the end of the embargo Thursday. Binh T. Ly, a Vietnamese-American businessman who first went public with the bribery charge, and testified before the Miami grand jury, called Friday for Mr. Brown's resignation and appointment of a special prosecutor. "Without an independent counsel, the investigation was a mere formality for a coverup by the Clinton administration," Mr. Ly said. The decision to drop the Brown investigation was made by justice, not the grand jury, which never voted on an indictment, he claimed.

Lagos court orders arrest of anti-drugs agents

LAGOS (R) — A Nigerian court has ordered the arrest of nine anti-narcotics agents in connection with the disappearance of a major drug haul from the agency, the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), said. Judge Funmilayo Oni-Okipka said the officials of the National Drug Law enforcement agency (NDLEA) must explain the loss of 12 of the 649 sachets of heroin allegedly imported into Nigeria by businessman Joe Brown Akubueze, NAN reported. Mr. Oni-Okipka did not give the names of the officials in court. The court is trying Mr. Akubueze, who has pleaded not guilty to six charges including conspiracy to import the drugs. The government, which had declared a war on corruption, was embarrassed by the disappearance of the drugs while in the care of the NDLEA, formed in 1990 to combat drugs trafficking.

Agents ready to sell phantom sub secrets'

STOCKHOLM (AP) — For more than a decade Sweden has been seeking proof of whether the Soviet — and now Russian — navy was sending submarines into Swedish coastal waters, and why, Swedish radio reported Friday that Russian intelligence officers are finally providing the answers — for cash. The radio quoted naval sources as saying Russian intelligence officers had sold information about a special submarine spying unit based at Primorsk, near the Russian naval base of Kaliningrad. The Swedish military has been told that the Primorsk unit uses the Swedish archipelago as its playground or for training exercises, the radio report said. The Swedish military is taking the information seriously, said the report. There was no official government comment.

Kuwait women used to bust arms hideouts

KUWAIT (R) — Women have joined a Kuwaiti police hunt for illegal weapons to prevent suspects using conservative traditions to foil raids, a newspaper reported on Saturday. Colonel Abdul Hamed Al Awadi, commander of a special force that hunts for the illicit guns from the Gulf war, said police had often been kept waiting outside houses on the pretext of the men needing time to remove their women inside from public view, the English-language Arab Times reported. The men had used the time to hide their guns. "To overcome such difficulties the force decided to employ women to assist in searching houses, especially when females are involved," the newspaper quoted Mr. Awadi as saying.

Palestinian police get Greek help

ATHENS (AFP) — The Palestinian police awaiting deployment in Jericho and Gaza under the autonomy accord will wear navy blue uniforms and drive trucks supplied by Greece. Palestinian officials said here. "We will take the navy blue uniforms, not the green ones which do not suit our future policemen." Mr. Abdullah Abdullah, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) representative in Athens, told AFP. He spoke after a PLO delegation on Thursday ended a one-week visit to Greece to consider offers of uniforms, trucks and old helicopters from the Greek army. "The trucks are useful. We do not need helicopters at this stage," he added. The Greek Defence Ministry said Greece would make the contribution to help towards implementing the September accord which calls for limited Palestinian self-rule starting in the Gaza Strip and Jericho. The PLO delegation — which included military officers, a pilot and an engineer — toured four bases to look at old Greek army equipment. "The Greek offer is very generous and we are grateful," Mr. Abdullah said. The Palestinians turned down six old U.S.-made Sioux CH-13 helicopters, and two 25-year-old Cessna U-17AB reconnaissance planes. Greek sources said that the U.S. asked for more recent planes. Old bulldozers and British-type helmets were also turned down.

Arab Maghreb Union postpones summit

TUNIS (R) — Five North African countries decided to postpone a summit of the leaders aimed at boosting the economic unification of the countries, an official statement said on Friday. The council of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) grouping leaders of Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Libya and Mauritania was expected to be held at the end of this week in Tunisia, but officials said it was agreed to postpone it for a "short period." Said Ben Mustapha, Tunisian junior minister for foreign affairs, said after a two-day meeting of the AMU foreign ministers that the summit was postponed for "scheduling" reasons. He said Tunisian President Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali and his colleagues would set a new date after further consultations. Diplomats said one of the reasons for the postponement was Mauritania's municipal elections



MOSQUE ATTACK: The body of a 15-year-old boy lies on the ground after he was killed in an attack on a mosque in Khartoum, Sudan, Friday (see story on page one). Reports of the death toll ranged between 13 and 50. At least five gunmen were involved, including foreigners, according to official statements from the Ministry of Interior (AFP photo)

Syria says Israel is stalling

DAMASCUS (R) — Syria said no progress had been made at two weeks of Arab-Israeli peace talks in Washington and on Saturday accused the Jewish state of stalling.

Syrian officials said Israel was demanding higher-level secret talks with Damascus while saying nothing about pulling out of the occupied Golan Heights.

The talks resumed on Jan. 24 after a four-month break and were adjourned on Thursday until Feb. 15. The U.S. State Department said this was after consultation with the parties, but Syrian officials said it was at Israel's request.

Negotiations involve the Jewish state, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and the Palestinians.

"The break in the talks, which was made at Israel's request, illustrates more of Israel's manoeuvres," said one Syrian official, adding that the Arab delegations had decided to stay in Washington.

Syrian officials said progress was made in the past two weeks.

Perry backs close Russian ties

MUNICH (Agencies) — The United States has led the faltering North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) alliance out of a dangerous post-cold war drift, but the West must press ahead rapidly to cement its ties with its former Soviet enemies, new U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry said Saturday.

"It's one thing to agree in principle and another thing to do it," Mr. Perry said of last month's NATO summit agreement to offer a "Partnership for Peace" to Russia and other budding East European democracies which would stop short of alliance membership or security guarantees.

He spoke to reporters en route from Washington a day after he was sworn in to replace former Defence Minister Les Aspin. Mr. Perry flew to Munich to attend a two-day annual security meeting of European political leaders.

Mr. Perry said he would stress in a major address to the conference on Sunday that NATO must immediately begin doing "brick-by-brick" work to start joint military exercises and other links between the alliance and the East.

He said he would call "for vigorous concrete actions by NATO to implement it, and implement it soon."

The Washington Post reported Saturday that the Clinton administration is shifting attention from Russia's domestic problems to its troubled relations with neighbouring states.

Quoting senior officials it did not identify, the paper said that President Clinton, in a meeting Monday with top foreign policy advisers, discussed the need to persuade Russia to withdraw troops from countries where governments reject their presence.

Those countries include Estonia, Latvia, and former Soviet republics to the south, according to the Post.

The paper said that the president and his advisers reached what one official called a "firm consensus" to support Ukraine's efforts to boost a sagging economy and end a dispute with Russia over Ukraine's possession of Soviet-era nuclear arms.

Mr. Clinton has decided to double the proposed aid to Ukraine from \$150 million announced during the president's stop in Kiev last month to more than \$300 million, the newspaper said.

German Chancellor Helmut Kohl warned Russians Saturday not to adopt an imperialist policy, saying they must foster trust among their neighbours without thought of creating spheres of influence or interest.

But Mr. Kohl said that NATO must take seriously

"Either Israel submits to the will of the U.N. resolutions calling for its full withdrawal from the occupied Arab lands or it should bear the full responsibility of wasting a unique opportunity for peace," one Syrian official said.

The officials condemned Israel's approval on Thursday to expand settlements in the Golan Heights and said the action "showed Israel did not want to make peace."

Syrian President Hafez Al Assad said after talks with U.S. President Bill Clinton in Geneva last month that Syria was ready for normal ties with Israel as part of a comprehensive peace settlement.

Syria demands Israel return the Golan Heights seized in the 1967 war. Israel has said it is prepared to withdraw at least in part but will not discuss how far until Damascus agrees to "full peace" including embassies, open borders and trade.

The Syrian officials said Israel was now demanding the two sides hold secret talks and

upgrade the level of negotiations, now held at ambassadorial level.

"Israel resumed (talks) to play the tune of secret negotiations, as if what could be said in secret could not be said in public."

It also demanded contacts at a higher level while not uttering any word about full withdrawal from the Golan," the Syrian official said.

He added: "A vivid example of the failure of secret talks is the outcome of the Oslo negotiations between the PLO and Israel as both parties were unable to implement their agreement on the ground."

Referring to Israel's approach to expand two settlements in the Golan and its call for a referendum on the fate of the area, he said:

"Israel has reactivated its settlement policy in a clear provocation to Syria... it also started to market its intention to conduct a referendum on the Golan as if international law allows her to do so."

The committee, mentioned in the September PLO-Israel accord, has not been formed yet and no date has been set for it to convene.

Egypt and Jordan, which host large numbers of displaced Palestinians, as well as the PLO are contemplating holding a meeting at the ministerial level to coordinate positions prior to a meeting including Israel.

The Sept. 13 Israel-PLO accord states that displaced persons have the right to return.

Unlike Palestinian refugees of 1948, displaced persons will not be compensated if they wish to remain in their country.

Russian fears of encirclement and isolation.

"Therefore NATO seeks to develop security cooperation with Russia and Ukraine, leading to a new relationship, a real and stable partnership," he told the opening of a conference of some 200 Western defence and security specialists.

"In return, however, we expect Russia to continue a foreign policy marked by constructive participation in solving international problems," Mr. Kohl said.

The European guidelines established since the conclusion of the Helsinki Final Act, especially unqualified respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations, must be adhered to unequivocally.

"Above all Russia must foster trust, particularly among its neighbours, through its own action, thoughts of creating spheres of influence or interest," Mr. Kohl said.

The official said that the president and his advisers reached what one official called a "firm consensus" to support Ukraine's efforts to boost a sagging economy and end a dispute with Russia over Ukraine's possession of Soviet-era nuclear arms.

Mr. Clinton has decided to double the proposed aid to Ukraine from \$150 million announced during the president's stop in Kiev last month to more than \$300 million, the newspaper said.

German Chancellor Helmut Kohl warned Russians Saturday not to adopt an imperialist policy, saying they must foster trust among their neighbours without thought of creating spheres of influence or interest.

But Mr. Kohl said that NATO must take seriously

Egypt starts counting holders of its papers living in Jordan

By Wafa Amr
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Egyptian embassy in Amman has started counting the number of Palestinian holders of the Egyptian travel documents residing in Jordan who have fled the occupied territories after the 1967 war, and who wish to return home, Arab diplomatic sources said on Saturday.

Sources at the Egyptian embassy said persons displaced in the 1967 war who wish to return to the occupied Palestinian territories were asked to fill a one-page application in order to enable the Cairo government and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) to compile the total number of displaced persons wishing to return.

Palestinians from the Gaza Strip have been issued Egyptian documents to facilitate their movement. Unlike West Bank residents, they were not eligible to acquire Jordanian passports. The Gaza Strip was under Egyptian control until 1967.

Egyptian diplomats said the census, which already started in Egypt itself, was aimed at facilitating the work of a four-party committee comprised of Jordan, Egypt, Israel and the PLO that should meet to discuss the return of displaced Palestinians and their economic needs.

The committee, mentioned in the September PLO-Israel accord, has not been formed yet and no date has been set for it to convene.

Egypt and Jordan, which host large numbers of displaced Palestinians, as well as the PLO are contemplating holding a meeting at the ministerial level to coordinate positions prior to a meeting including Israel.

The Sept. 13 Israel-PLO accord states that displaced persons have the right to return.

Unlike Palestinian refugees of 1948, displaced persons will not be compensated if they wish to remain in their country.

Russian origin have expressed concern over the possibility that they might have to give up their Jordanian passport if they choose to return and live in the occupied territories. Jordanian officials said displaced Palestinians would have the choice, but would not be forced to return.

Once they choose to return, they have to drop their Jordanian nationality, a senior Jordanian official said.

PLO officials said Israel would allow Palestinians in the self-rule areas to carry Palestinian travel documents, but not passports. This would leave Palestinians who choose to return from Jordan without a passport, making it difficult, if not impossible, for them to travel. Jordan has been the only Arab country to issue Palestinian passports.

Hope for Afghan truce despite unabated violence

KABUL (AFP) — A senior Afghan Foreign Ministry official expressed hope Saturday for an end to fighting in Kabul between forces for and against President Burhanuddin Rabbani, despite continued hostilities including rocket-fire on the Red Cross headquarters.

The official said the efforts of a peace team headed by independent Mujahedeen commander Jalaluddin Haqqani were continuing.

"We are very hopeful for a ceasefire," said the Foreign Ministry official.

"The Haqqani mission is trying to establish a long-lasting solution," he added.

The official, who declined to be named, said the peace delegation had decided not to issue a statement to the press until they had achieved concrete results.

Kabul was mainly quiet Saturday following serious fighting late Friday afternoon when Rabbani rivals were beaten back as they attempted to attack the state bus station near the Qalab Mahmud Khan bridge.

However the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

was struck by an incoming long-range rocket early Saturday, just as the 14-strong Red Cross staff were leaving after their morning meeting.

Shrapnel from the explosion tore a gaping hole in the roof and wounded three Afghan personnel, one seriously. He was rushed to hospital with a broken leg.

"This can happen anywhere in Kabul," said Red Cross chief Peter Stocker.

"We will not allow the incident to affect our normal humanitarian work in and around the capital."

However, Mr. Stocker said that the ICRC would beef up security measures to ensure the safety of its staff, only the lower floor of the delegation headquarters will be occupied from now on, and more sand bags will be placed around windows and open spaces for the protection of the reduced personnel there.

With both Mr. Rabbani and his rival — former communist militiaman General Abdul Rashid Dostum and his ally Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar — taking hardline stances, negotiations for a lasting peace in Afghanistan could be lengthy.

Two Kuwaitis, accused of sheltering and aiding the alleged plotters, face prison sentences of up to 10 years.

Mr. Shatti insisted during the hearing that he had enough information to link at least five of the defendants to the Iraqi intelligence. He said the Kuwaitis who saw explosives and weapons with the infiltrators were guilty of not informing the police.

"We are talking about sentencing people to death here," argued Mohammad Ashkani, one of the Iraqi defendants' lawyers. "I don't care about your testimony. I want conclusive evidence."

The judge adjourned the trial till March 5 at the request of the defence lawyers who said they needed time to answer Mr. Shatti's allegations.

Prosecutors have charged 12 defendants, including a Kuwaiti, of infiltrating the emirate with an explosives-laden car to kill Mr. Bush during his April visit to Kuwait. If convicted, they could be hanged.

Two Kuwaitis, accused of

sheltering and aiding the

alleged plotters, face

prison sentences of up to

10 years.

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (R) — While the nation's east coast and midwest suffered bitter cold, Alaska has been struck by a winter heat wave producing budding tree limbs, wide expanses of green grass, dejected skiers and confusion.

Stationary weather patterns elsewhere have funnelled a tropical jet stream all the way to the arctic coast, causing a string of record and near-record daily highs.

National Weather Service meteorologists said a low-pressure system off the Aleutians and a high-pressure system off the coast of Canada had merged, bringing warm air from the south to the state.

"It's been a record-breaking winter," said Henry Perry, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service.

"It's been a record-breaking winter," said Henry Perry, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service.